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STRATEGY AND POLITICS

THE significance of the ill news from the Eastern Front has now dawned on the British people. The broad issue is simple. The Russian armies, brave, enormous and highly mechanised, provide the only instrument on the Continent capable of withstanding Hitler's legions; the whole of Germany's forces, reinforced by Finns, Italians, Rumanians and Hungarians, have been required to drive them back. Europe, left thinly guarded, has shown in half a dozen countries that Quisling government does not involve popular submission to the Nazis, and that large anti-Fascist forces are willing to risk all for the chance of deliverance. This summer has offered a unique opportunity. Hitler aims at nothing less than the triumph of that Geopolitik conception he learnt from Hess and Haushofer; the domination of the great central land block of the world, whose ruler would be supreme and invincible. He intends, as he told Mr. Matsuoka not long ago, soon to be a neighbour of Japan in the Far East. If Russia's forces can be defeated, glib talk from this side about American aid will have little significance. There is no sign that America will bring herself to the point of sending an army to Europe. Even if she does so, the date of her readiness lies far in the future, and its opportunity will have gone.

In spite of the ghastly slaughter and the rapidity of the German advance, there is no sign that Hitler is succeeding in breaking Russian resistance. But the British people are far from content to stand watching the partial destruction of the great Soviet war machine without being able to render aid on a scale that can influence the immediate issue. Rejecting the more pessimistic interpretations of what is happening on the road to Moscow, we have to admit that the Russians, after their loss of trained men, equipment and a great part of their industrial potential, cannot for years to come be as strong as they were this summer. If our rulers had been able to consider Russia not as a sideshow, an invaded country to be "aided," but as the crucial battle-field of Europe and had combined their military action with that of the U.S.S.R., there was a good chance that this war might have ended comparatively quickly; the opportunity will not be repeated.

On the facts that are known to us no sober commentator can pretend to form any confident estimate of the present position. What is clear is that the Führer, staking his own prestige on the operation, has flung all the manhood and machinery of the Reich into the drive on Moscow. If he fails to take it before deep winter sets in, moral decay may begin to assail a hitherto invincible army. If he succeeds, he will cut Russia in two, and compel her armies to withdraw behind the Volga, with the half-developed industries of the Urals as their only bases of supply. Their fate would then turn on their ability to hold Rostov and Astrakhan, the centres from which is distributed the oil on which mechanised warfare and agriculture alike depend. That issue hangs in the balance, and on it our future as well as Russia's may depend.

What, then, have we done, and what do we propose to do to decide this issue?

In much that is said and written, we have all but slipped into the American attitude of regard-ourselves as yet another arsenal of democracy, which makes the tools which others use at the cost of their lives and homes. Even so, three months elapsed before the Moscow Conference organised supply on a scale that may one day affect the issue. Lord Beaverbrook is manifestly as determined as he is energetic, and the workers are doing their part with a will. But the tanks they have only now begun to make have prolonged sea voyages in slow convoys to cover before they reach the gateways into Russia; and at Archangel or the Persian Gulf they have not reached their journey's end. Our bombers harass German cities and shipping, but they have not compelled the enemy to withdraw much of his aerial fleet from the Russian Front. For the rest, in anticipation of the crucial struggle for the use and possession of the Caucasian oil-wells, we have shared in the occupation of Iran, and at the risk of over-straining our shipping resources, we are massing our forces in the Middle East. The rest of our army is immobilised in this island by a threat of invasion that cannot be realised while the Russians hold out. Finally, through Lord Halifax, we have informed the enemy that he need fear no diversion in Europe.

Is there in all this a coherent strategical idea? As we survey it, we can find in it only the primitive conception of placing troops to guard each endangered spot in turn. We fend off invasion by sitting down in our millions on the shores of this island. Is Suez threatened? Then we cover Egypt, Syria and Irak with our outposts. Baku might be taken, so we settle down in Iran. Always it is the enemy who dictates to us our counter-strokes, and always they involve the maximum strain on our merchant tonnage and naval escorts. It is arguable, none the less, that we might have defended Suez, and even Baku, more effectively by a descent, for example, on the peninsula of Cherbourg or of Brest. This general debate on the possibility of a diversion which would draw off thirty divisions from the German army in the East and put new heart into Britain has, unfortunately, to be carried on by amateur strategists. But many who are not amateurs believe that such an attack on another front might have changed the prospects of the war had our experts not from the beginning assumed that Russia would be speedily defeated. If they had started preparations last July, diversions that might have turned the scale in Eastern Europe would have been possible. As it is, we have embarked on a different course. Discovering too late that the Soviet Union would resist to the death, the British and American governments hope to bring material and spiritual comfort by sending supplies. We are now pledged to a material support that involves a drain on production and shipping that will long make any other battlefield difficult to supply.

This scheme of local defences, rudimentary as military strategy, seems to have its explanation in the political instincts of our governing class. It failed, partly in ignorance, and partly in prejudice, to realise the chance with which the entry into the field of the Red Army presented us. At first it despised this ally: then it was inhibited from any combined strategy by its instinctive repulsion to co-operation with the forces of revolution. Another pre-occupation is increasingly evident in all it does. It is active on the lines of local defence, in protecting the overseas Empire and its communications. But does it remember that this enemy can be overthrown only in Europe and with the aid of its enslaved populations? Unless these doubts and anxieties are promptly answered in action, they will sap our national unity.

It is well that the allies should confer over supply. But the case for the creation of an Inter-allied Council to work out a long-range strategical plan for victory is at least as urgent. We are content to take one example of the need of it. While our gaze is fixed on the road to Moscow, the Japanese have their eyes on Vladivostok. In a matter of days or hours they might decide to stab Russia in the back, as the other jackal stabbed France. Nothing less than a concerted threat of instant naval action by the American and British Fleets together may avail to stop Japan. Visibly Tokio is feeling its way and counting the risks. It is imperative that Washington, London and Moscow should act together to dispel her doubts. Our hope of preventing Hitler from dominating the world depends on our ability to create between these three a solidarity that defies reverses and shames suspicion.

The Home Front (*by an Industrial Correspondent*)

When shall we begin to take communal feeding really seriously? Last week's debate in the House brought out the inadequacy of the arrangements in many factories which are supposed to have proper canteens; and in the case of the coal mines, though the matter has been talked about for months, there are barely more than a dozen pits which have real canteens equipped to serve hot meals, and more than half have still no canteen arrangements of any sort. Even many big munition works have canteen facilities for only a fraction of their employees; and most of the middle-sized as well as the small factories have still no canteens at all. Often, of course, there is in the smaller establishments a real difficulty about accommodation, as well as in the way of providing good service. In effect, while the factory canteen is the right solution in the case of large works with plenty of space, the hosts of workers employed in small establishments are never likely to be catered for adequately in this way. The right course for them is a big extension of public restaurants, either open to all comers, or confined to the employees of a particular group of factories; and ample use ought to be made of the power to take over buildings for this purpose. Among the upper and middle classes, hardly any worker now lives mainly on his ration: feeding out has increased enormously, as it was bound to do. This means that the larger proportion of food goes to those who need it least. There remains the problem of the working-class housewives, including expectant and nursing mothers—the classes which are at present getting the worst deal of all. Doubtless, it can be said in favour of the Ministry of Food that it is moving in the right direction. But, oh! how slowly!

* * *

The Chancellor has said that Great Britain will not go back to the gold standard, or to a formal linking of sterling with the dollar, without legislation, and that accordingly the House of Commons can rely on having the last word about our future monetary policy. I would not give a thank you for this assurance. No doubt Parliament would have to be called in at some stage to ratify the monetary policy decided on by the bankers and the Government. But is there really anything to prevent the bankers and the Government from so tying us up without going near Parliament as to leave Parliament no option? I am not suggesting that the Chancellor has any intention of going back to gold, either during the war or immediately afterwards. But this discussion about the gold standard is calculated to fog the real issue. The important thing is that after this war Great Britain shall not, in a foolish chase after pre-war parity with the dollar, follow a deflationary policy such as was followed after the last war. That was done last time, not when we actually returned to the gold standard in 1925, but years before, when the bankers, headed by the Bank of England and supported by the Government, began edging us back to pre-war parity as fast as they dared. Let us hope that the lesson of that folly has been learnt. But it is worth pointing out that there are really two quite separate issues involved. "Should we deflate?" is not the same question as "Should we go back to gold?" After the last war we could have gone back to the gold standard without deflation, if we had gone back, as France did, at a different parity. The gold standard is compatible with any level of parity; all it does, in itself, is to tie the currency to gold and therewith to other currencies which are tied to gold. This means a surrender of monetary independence; but it need not mean deflation, unless other gold standard countries deflate. The really practical question is not that of going or not going back to gold, but of reaching an agreement with the United States that neither country will adopt a deflationary policy during the period of reconstruction. That is the point on which our monetary experts ought now to be concentrating all their attention.

* * *

I wonder what Ernest Bevin meant by the second Man-power Survey, of which he is awaiting the result. The only such survey I know of as proceeding at present is Sir William Beveridge's investigation into the use of skilled workers in the armed forces, of which the interim report was published a few weeks ago and the final report is said to be nearly ready. This is a highly important investigation; but it covers only one particular aspect of the man-power problem. I hear a good many hair-raising stories of the misuse of skilled men in the Army, but far fewer of misuse in the Navy or the R.A.F. In the case of the Army, a good deal of the trouble seems to arise out of the indiscriminate use of Territorials and Reservists who were called up at the beginning of the war, and have been used as ordinary soldiers ever since without any regard for their skill in some particular trade. Clearly, these sources ought to be most carefully combed now for skilled men, who should be either used for skilled work in the Army or promptly returned to industry. But there are other cases. A few are no doubt due to a man's actual unwillingness to do skilled work, and to his preference for a life of no responsibility as an ordinary private soldier. But many more are due to the reluctance of commanding officers to lose men who are above the average in intelligence and general capacity. I hope Sir William Beveridge's comb will find out quite enough skilled men to prevent any further depletion of the supply of skilled labour for industry, and to secure the return of certain kinds of skilled tradesmen, *e.g.*, highly skilled sheet-metal workers—of whom there is a really serious industrial shortage.

* * *

If Mr. Bevin was not referring to this inquiry of Sir William Beveridge's, he can, I suppose, have been referring only to the regular "July count" of insured workers, of which the results should be available to him just about now. This will show the amount of net shifting there has been during the past year, both between industries and between different parts of the country. But you and I will not be allowed to know the result; for ever since the outbreak of war these figures have been kept secret, presumably in the hope of concealing from the Germans the character of our adaption of our industries for war purposes. I cannot myself see that the industrial figures could possibly tell the Germans anything they do not know quite well already. But in this war the Government appears to have a mania for secrecy—so much so, that one is often inclined to suspect that the purpose is not so much to delude the Nazis as to leave its critics at home effectively disarmed.

* * *

"Urbanus" writes:—

The Board of Trade claims that its concentration of production is virtually completed in the "controlled" industries and is now being extended to other industries, such as bicycles, glazed tiles, china clay and woodworking. The labour released by concentration has been 144,000 workers—about one-fifth of the labour force before the scheme was introduced last April—and about 45 million square feet of gross factory space have been or will be made available for storage or other production purposes. The Board is, however, at pains to point out that the primary object of concentration was not to secure a further release of labour—the Limitation of Supplies Orders had already cut down the labour employed on controlled goods for the home market by 134,000—but a more economical working of the factories in the restricted industries. Does this really mean that the object was primarily to increase profitability? This may explain why the Board had to resort to compulsory measures only to a small extent. It was only in the minor industries, where small units were the rule, that the Board had to nominate nucleus firms and compel others to concentrate therein by the threat of requisitioning labour or factory space, or by withholding raw materials. The result of the Board's success in concentration must, therefore, have been to enhance considerably the powers and prestige of the large manufacturing associations. In other words, the cartelisation of industry has been carried a big step forward under Government pressure. If concentration was not primarily designed to secure the release of labour in the controlled industries it would certainly ease the man-power shortage if it were applied ruthlessly to the distributive trades. Here is the only big reservoir of labour left untapped, but for political reasons the Government is going slow on it or is hiding behind the Board of Trade committee which was set up to examine the problems of the retail trade (other than food) under the chairmanship of Mr. Craig Henderson. This committee should be pressed to make a report. Probably the reasons why the Government does not face up to concentration in the retail trade are partly because every conservatively minded member of Parliament regards the small shopkeeper as a small capitalist, the pillar and prop of the whole capitalist system, and partly because it has no equitable compensation plan for shopkeepers forced out of business. But this will not do. The Government can solve the compensation problem as soon as it admits that profits, if not capital, should be pooled. The man-power problem is so serious that the issue cannot be avoided much longer.

Russia in the House (*By a Parliamentary Correspondent.*)

The Prime Minister's petulant refusal, in reply to Shinwell, to agree to a debate, either in secret or in public, on the help we are rendering to Russia has perturbed many M.P.s. Several Conservative Members expressed the view that the situation was sufficiently serious to warrant the calling of an all-party meeting to discuss the failures of the Government. The reason for the request is twofold. The first is a domestic issue. The Prime Minister refuses Members the opportunity of bringing to his notice in debate the uneasiness both of themselves and those they represent over the inactivity of British forces while Russia is fighting for her life. Aneurin Bevan expressed a widely held view when he asked the Prime Minister why it is unwise for Members to discuss what this country is doing to help Russia when Lord Halifax, a Member of the War Cabinet (" an irresponsible person with a bad record ! ") gives gratuitous reassurances to the enemy that they will not be attacked anywhere. Bevan's unwise phrase gave the Prime Minister an excuse to fly into a passion at the " abuse of a man who is on a high mission outside this country." Apart from the Parliamentary Private Secretaries, the House was not amused.

The domestic issue, the relationship between the Executive and the House, has been raised in an acute form in two other instances. Mr. Morrison has refused MacGovern a permit to visit Ireland to investigate matters connected with the imprisonment of Cahir Healy under the Defence Regulations. When Mr. Maxton raised the question, Mr. Peake point-blank refused to reconsider the decision. Mr. Irving Albery, a Conservative, gave notice to raise the matter on the adjournment. The other instance is the resignation of four members of the Air Services Sub-Committee of the Select Committee on National Expenditure. They resigned because it has been proposed that one of their reports should be sent privately to the Prime Minister instead of being presented to the House, when in their view the House was entitled to a report on serious maladministration and waste. They have since withdrawn their resignations on the assurance that their criticisms would receive the Premier's personal attention. This may be the best way to achieve their object.

The Continental Press

" The Germans never try to impose their ideas on other people," declared the *Frankfürter Zeitung* lately. But freedom of the press has been practically abolished in the occupied countries. They are forced to publish the same news the German public is allowed to get. In spite of this fact, an amazing amount of courage is displayed by both editors and writers. This is done by publishing personal opinions of members of the staff and by mentioning death-sentences, heavy fines or imprisonment imposed upon the unarmed anonymous allied army which is fighting Hitler.

The Belgians, Flemish and Walloons, are united in their campaign. The press was urged to warn the " pro-British part of the population to stop chalking V.'s, R.A.F. and anti-Nazi slogans on the walls." But in spite of poster-warnings that Nazi sentries would shoot at sight any adult or child found scribbling insults to the German nation, inscriptions continue to appear overnight. *Het Laatest Nieuws* reports that death sentences and imprisonment up to eight years have been imposed on men and women for hiding, feeding and helping British soldiers. Press notices reveal the cutting of official Nazi cables in Louvain and large-scale arrests of " suspect individuals." The entirely Nazi-controlled *Le Nouveau Journal* declared that in particular " certain priests and bishops excel in treacherous work and urge their parishioners to obey God rather than man." The secret paper *La Libre Belgique* has a large circulation in spite of the Gestapo rewards promised to anybody denouncing editor or printer. Almost daily, papers mention the escape or attempted escape of boys and students to Britain. There is a strong and ever-growing opposition to Germano-Belgian industrial collaboration, and *Le Soir* says that " Belgian industrialists are boycotting the industrial exhibition at Brussels." In Holland, in response to a large-scale campaign for volunteers against Bolshevism, only 1,000 men have enlisted so far. *De Maasbode*, the Catholic paper, is banned because it published protests of bishops and priests against pagan Nazism. *De Standaard* dared to print a farewell article by Dr. Colijn, explaining his resignation. He expressed the hope that, in spite of his age, he might one day be able to resume 22 years of work with this paper. But " that it was quite impossible for him to work with an imposed colleague whose political opinions were entirely different from his own." The new Dutch Nazi editor, Dr. Max Blokzijl, proclaimed in his first leader that it is his aim to explain the New Order to his readers. Sabotage in factories, strikes and the theft of textile ration cards totalling one million points, as well as official seals, are reported by *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*. The *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden* attacks the clergy who are " stubbornly resisting the new ideals of the Führer and constantly sabotaging the reconstruction of Europe.

In France opposition is voiced specially in the unoccupied provinces, where *Le Temps* and *Figaro* are published. In June, the Catholic revue *Esprit International* was banned. In its last number one article was devoted to the great work on Joan of Arc by Péguy, Socialist, Catholic and Patriot. Passages of his works are quoted which apply to present-day France : " Salvation would mean nothing if it did not come from a free man." " I shall refuse to obey if justice and freedom require disobedience." In the *Figaro*, Kleber Haeder deplores that " no trace of true French spirit is to be found in the new French films " (by now almost entirely under Nazi supervision). And letters to the editor protest against a new film being shot—*The Assassination of Santa Claus*—as offensive to the religious community. The Communist *Humanité* is officially banned, but has a large-scale secret circulation under the nose of the Gestapo. D'Ormesson writes in his come-back article in the *Figaro* his conception of what a future State ought to be if it wants to survive : " immaculate, incorruptible, non-opportunist to any political fluctuations."

Notices in the Norwegian press show that the Norwegians show a complete disregard to death, loss of freedom and property in their stubborn fight against Nazism. The county of Rogaland has lately been fined 50,000 kroner for the cutting of military cables used by the Nazis. Rogaland has the highest war-tax of the country for " repeated and continuous sabotage and the pulling down of German posters." The secret papers *Eldsvoll* and *Det Frie Norge* have a higher circulation than any other paper in Norway. They appear regularly, they are not mimeographed, but printed, and editor and printers have not been traced " because a group of treacherous elements is trying to hamper reconstruction." The bishops are extremely courageous in uniting the majority of anti-Nazis. They published a declaration in various parish papers (some of which have been since banned) that " the Church stands unshakeable and cannot be bound by any State authority. The Church can never be silent when God's commandments are waived aside and sin appears." Norwegian papers published the names of six well-known actors who were arrested because of their refusal to broadcast over the (Nazi-controlled) wireless. A message from Sweden says that the audience in cinemas whistles at Nazi news reels and applauds when British prisoners or " Prime Liar Churchill " is shown. Pictures of British men are no longer shown, and some people whom the Nazis saw applauding have been fined.

The Danish press is under strong Nazi pressure. Still, the famous author-priest Kaj Munk (who wrote a successful anti-Goering play), continues to write cleverly camouflaged anti-Nazi Sunday sermons in *National Tidende*. The chief editor of *Kristelig Dagblad*, known for his patriotism and his anti-Nazi views, has suddenly resigned. At the same time *Kristelig Dagbladed* deplores that " Denmark is becoming a police state which is a threat to the Danish character and would make our ancestors turn in their graves." The chief editor of *Socialdemokraten* refused to print an article by a convert to Nazism. When forced to publish it, he was dismissed for stating that this did not represent the opinion of the editorial staff. *Berlingske Tidende* has published an article by Dr. Christiani about actual living conditions. He points out that the cost of living since the occupation has risen by 76 per cent., the price index by 107 per cent., the average working-class income only by 19 per cent., and that the standard of living has been reduced by 20 per cent. The Danes scuttle ships transporting goods to Germany, they cut cables, sabotage machines producing arms, and the press continues to publish second page notices about people being fined or imprisoned for listening to the " Judeo-British news of the Ministry of Lies."

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS allow readers to post this paper to any part of the British Empire (excepting Eire and Northern Ireland) and to any country of the American Continent (excepting dependencies of enemy-occupied countries) but readers are advised to consult a Post Office or a newsagent before attempting to post elsewhere.

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THE POLL AND THE SURVEY

The principle that government exists for the advantage of the governed carries with it the obligation to discover, measure and express popular issues and needs. The acclamation of the market-place served in the days of Aristophanes, but gave way to the device of parliamentary representation in the nation state. The Webbs a generation ago urged the development of a new device with an official representative whose job it would be to determine the real mind of his constituents on a variety of important topics. This role is to-day being played to an increasing extent by the expert assessor of the Gallup Poll and its imitators and rivals. We are told that Mussolini and Hitler, as well as Mr. Roosevelt and the Ministry of Information, are kept in contact with public opinion by various types of test polls.

A well-informed American correspondent in an article on another page of this issue discusses the obvious limitations of this method. Though some of the polls are carefully and expertly devised to avoid the kind of leading question which inevitably produces the required answer, it remains true that no accurate measurement can be obtained of opinions which do not really exist. A comparatively small part of the electorate is sufficiently well-informed and sufficiently interested in politics to have an opinion that will stand the test of quickly moving events. Such polls measure not informed and stable opinions, but the day's balance of emotions. A statesman who is guided by a Gallup Poll abnegates the functions of leadership. If he is wise he will consult such polls for indications and hints of the changing moods of the public ; he takes notice of the interpretations of such polls by expert sociologists and pays more attention to the " quality " of the opinion expressed than to the mere numbers voting for and against. And he will not forget that a large part of the Noes will turn into Yeses if he gives a lead.

There is another realm of enquiry in which this fundamental difficulty of the divided mind does not apply. A trained sociologist working with a team of trained investigators can deduce much interesting and valuable information from a public opinion survey, but if their enquiry is into needs and effects rather than into chaotic states of mind, their results may have far more measurable significance.

Here we enter a well-ploughed field of social investigation to which statesmen and administrators should pay far more attention especially in wartime, when the usual methods of public expression are necessarily curtailed. At least since 1890, when Booth was at work, social surveys have provided a mass of material about the conditions under which the ordinary man lives and works; from this material there has emerged, at the very least by implication, explanations of certain long-discussed social ills, revelations of undreamt-of social ills, and guide lines as to their solution.

From the beginning these enquiries were carried out by unofficial social workers, by universities, and by disinterested business men. The essence of survey technique is simple; the investigator records measurable items in the informant's environment and recent behaviour, and from these quantities draws his conclusions. For example, recent surveys have shown that practically all working-class poverty is found in those families either where there is an excessive number of school children, or where there is no male earner, or where the head of the family is over 65 years of age; in short, that comparatively small expenditures on children's allowances and on widows' and old-age pensions would remove subnormal living standards.

Again, one such survey carried out in London showed (by recording the age and sex composition of each family, the number of "full" and the number of "subsidiary" earners in each family, the age and occupation of the chief earner, the earnings of each worker, the amount of the unearned income), precisely what proportion of working-class families would be adversely affected by the Military Service Acts, the composition of these families and how they could best be compensated—increased allowances for adult dependents, differential allowances for child dependents, etc.

Yet other urgent wartime problems could have been solved by an examination of the same survey. It showed where the average working-class family kept its store of coal (over half had to keep their supplies indoors), how much was consumed each week, and how often the store was replenished; it also showed how deeply dependent the working-class family is upon its coal fire; not only for room warming, but also for cooking and for water heating. In view of this information the advice of the Ministry of Mines (put aside a ton a month during the summer) and its exhortations (cut down your coal consumption) might have been better worded.

Again, the advice of the Ministry of Food might have been more effective if it had known that the cooking equipment of the most frequent type of working-class family consists of four saucepans, two frying-pans, two pie-dishes, and no steamers, no cake-tins and no casserole dishes; or if it had known that even in London over two-fifths of all workers went home to a mid-day meal, and that this was regarded by their families as the main meal of the day. In short, there can be no doubt that from such surveys—using, it is true, the question and answer method, but restricting the questions to incidents of fact—a great deal can be learned about the working of our society.

We come then to the second issue. If we agree that survey methods are useful in particular fields, what standards must be observed in order to ensure reliability? Such surveys of course can only be carried out with a sample of the population and not the whole population. This reduction of scale, however, in no wise impairs the validity of the results, provided the sample is chosen at random, or as the layman says, is truly representative of the whole population. If the sample constitutes a microcosmic reflection of the larger body the characteristics discovered in the sample will hold true in the larger body within precise and measurable limits. The difficulties of obtaining such a sample are, however, substantial. Merely to contact at random people in the street is nearly always misleading. People who are found walking around the streets during the hours when investigators are normally at work are not representative of the total population.

Even in peacetime we had reached the age of "positive" Government; its field of decision making to include education, factory conditions, earnings, housing, health, transport and entertainment. The coming of the war has merely extended this field in which the legislator should be wise, and simultaneously taken away from him many of the normal sources to which he turned for guidance. The world of the local parties, with all its attendant social activities, and the space at the disposal of the press, have been drastically reduced. The war effort of many Government departments might well have been more effective if it had been carried out on the basis of fuller knowledge of the ways of life of the British people and with a ready ear to their comments and reactions. The rationing of clothes, the establishment of communal restaurants, the redistribution of industry, the rehousing of evacuees, the introduction of compulsory saving, the extension of food rationing, the compulsory enrolment of women—all these might have gained in effectiveness and national unity if the Government had known the facts about the wardrobe of the average working-class family, the meal-time habits of workers, the readiness or unreadiness of different types of workers to change either their employer or their place of work, the conditions under which Londoners lived before the war, the organisation of saving within the working-class family, the diet and purchasing habits of the working-class family, and the working day of the ordinary housewife. "To function efficiently democratic society must have knowledge disseminated and in particular full knowledge about itself."

THE PRESS AT NEWHAVEN

[This report comes from a civilian whose duties took him to Newhaven and who was himself present when the *Dinard* was alongside with the German prisoners on board. He was a first-hand witness of all the events he describes.]

PERHAPS the British journalists at Newhaven would not have so far departed from the better traditions of their profession if the Public Relations Officers who had been put in charge by the War Office had not themselves been starved of information from London. Their stock reply to the hail of questions was: "I honestly don't know, old boy; I'd tell you if I did." They did not even know the number of Germans on board the *Dinard*, though the prisoners were checked against a list as they went on board. As a result, the fifty or more correspondents and photographers with War Office passes wanted stories at all costs. They had to get a story even if it meant gate-crashing or building one up. About half a dozen American correspondents were at Newhaven; they behaved consistently well, and are not included in any comment I make. I asked one of the best known of them whether he had ever seen journalists in America behave as our people were doing at Newhaven. He said that in 20 years' experience in New York he had seen individual American journalists behave as badly, but had never seen so many do so at once.

In the first place there were journalists who refused to keep to the parts of the platform allowed them and got into trouble with the sentries by running alongside the ship, which was forbidden territory, shouting, "Hi, Jerry," to get the prisoners to look out of the portholes to be interrogated. Interviews with the prisoners were forbidden, and passes were issued on that understanding. One of the correspondents began his story with: "I am standing on the gangway plank of the *Dinard*," which, if it was true, was a confession that he was on forbidden territory. On this matter of misusing passes one or two correspondents had serious rows with the officers in charge. I was told that one reporter who had written about prisoners being exercised on deck was hauled before the Brigadier, for the Naval Flag-Officer who was in charge of the prisoners had rung him up to know why he was exercising the prisoners on deck. In fact, he had done nothing of the sort. The prisoners were exercised on a disused railway platform where they could see nothing. Another reporter described an interview with the harbour-master which had not taken place.

Of the stories themselves that were dished up to the public I would only say that many of them were constructions founded on little except the desire to compose as sensational and propagandist a story as possible. One *Daily Express* reporter wrote of a *Luftwaffe* officer with one leg: "As he came into the floodlight along the quayside he turned and looked at the white cliffs, then with a swagger he waved his stick and 'Fiends,' he shouted, and went on board." Actually he did not look at the white cliffs, he did not shout "Fiends," he did not wave his stick, and although he did go on board, it was hardly with a swagger. The *Daily Telegraph* and *Manchester Guardian* accounts gave a more sober interpretation; so, too, did the *Daily Mail* story, though I did not see why it described the officer's pointing his stick at the *St. Julien* as "a defiant farewell." The same *Daily Express* correspondent wrote: "Let us not sentimentalise these men. They are cut-throats and blackguards and would kill you as soon as look at you. They wear airmen's uniforms though they are covered with bandages and plaster, and they chatter in German." What did she expect them to chatter in?

She wrote in Monday's paper (October 6) that the prisoners on board "have become quarrelsome and restive. Some have had to be reprimanded and told to be quiet." The British Red Cross representative, who had access to the ship, and to M. Haccius, the Swiss delegate from the International Red Cross, categorically denied this to me. He also denied that any of the Germans had asked not to be repatriated. The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent headed his story of October 6, "Many Germans Plead to Stay in Britain." The story began: "I understand that a deputation of non-officer prisoners met a representative of the International Red Cross and pleaded with him to prevent their repatriation." The same story went on: "the small clique of virulent Nazis among the prisoners have no following among the rest of the men. These Nazis were soon lonely without a leader to salute. Within a few hours of being embarked they had elected a bearded submarine commander as a pocket Führer whom they now 'heil' at every encounter." This actually refers to the election, according to international custom, of an *homme de confiance* to represent the prisoners. He was Major Hackbarth, a clean-shaven officer of the *Luftwaffe*. In Wednesday's paper another *Daily Telegraph* reporter wrote, of the disembarkation: "Major Hackbarth did not wear *Luftwaffe* uniform but well-creased flannel trousers and a sports coat."

Whilst I was watching the disembarkation I heard one reporter say to another, "Which is Hackbarth?" He was answered, "That one in front." "How do you know?" "We've got to make him somebody," was the answer, "and that may as well be him."

When the last man came off—a naval officer—he spoke in English to a British officer and gave him a naval salute. I heard one ask another reporter, "What did that U-boat officer say?" "Something about baggage, but I don't know that he's a U-boat officer," the other replied "there's no means of telling." "He's a naval officer," was the answer; "therefore he's a U-boat commander "—with a knowing look, as between a couple of lads who knew how to build up a story.

This officer was referred to as "a tall naval surgeon, who had been captured at Narvik"; (*Daily Herald*) similarly in the *Daily Telegraph*, "a young U-boat commander" (*News Chronicle*); "the U-boat commander, the prisoners' Führer" (*Daily Mail*). "Major Hackbarth, a *Luftwaffe* officer, who has been their interpreter . . . the German major then gave a British salute" (*Daily Express*).

Some other guesswork phrases were:

"The officers coming down the gangway have sabre slashes . . . collected in Munich brawls." (*Daily Express*, October 8.)

"A fair-haired boy . . . goose-stepped down the quay" (*Daily Herald*, October 8). I watched and I saw no goose-step.

Compare "The men looked ghastly" (*News Chronicle*) and "The men looked sunburnt" (*Daily Herald*).

One more example. Two pictures were widely used. One was of a man whose jaw had been shot away and whose face was a mere patch-up. Under this the *Daily Mail* wrote, "A German airman returns ashore, lower lip caught up, features taut, holding back his tears of disappointment."

The other picture was of a young cripple coming down the gangplank. To do so he had to take his weight on both hands, which gripped the rails, and hunch his shoulders. When he got on to the quay he used a stick and walked erect. The picture caught him on the gangplank, head down, shoulders hunched. The captions were: "His Führer didn't want him . . . Bowed head, slow step, set face . . . this one walked down the gangplank with the disillusion of a dupe." (*Daily Express*.) "When hope gave way to despair" (*Daily Mail*), "Dejected and downcast" (*Daily Herald*).

TEST POLLS

(From an American Correspondent)

WHEN the history of America's part in this second World War comes to be written, one chapter will have to be devoted to that weird and wonderful invention—the national test poll. It is not so long since Dr. George Gallup, Director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, invented this handy device for telling America what it is thinking on any subject from Hitler to hydroponics, but already the average run-of-the-mill Yankee has developed a touching faith in the infallibility of polls to inform a harassed world what's going on around here.

The test poll is the greatest labour-saving device of the age. In order to discover just what he should think to be safely on the side of the big battalions, the American citizen in 1941 has only to glance at a daily newspaper. Thus he could discover that 56 per cent. of the American people favoured the U.S. Navy convoying in order to get lease-lend supplies to Britain, 21 per cent. favoured America's immediate entry into the war and 61 per cent. approved the occupation of Iceland. Such is the faith of countless Americans in the scientific accuracy of this method of "weighing" public opinion that some indignation was expressed recently when Washington frowned on a proposal to canvass a percentage of the new American army to discover whether it considered itself well treated!

It has been claimed for these test polls (the taking of which is responsible for the creation of a brand new profession, called "public-opinion surveyors") that they afford a surer indication than either Congress or the press of what the country wants. And it is stated—with what authority I know not—that the President himself is guided by the results of the nation-wide polls in formulating and timing successive moves made by the United States in the field of foreign affairs. These claims are made despite the fact that at the last presidential election more than one test-poll wizard declared before the voting that Wendell Willkie had it in the bag, thereby finding themselves well and truly out on a limb when the votes were counted.

Until just the other day, to have questioned one of these polls would have been regarded in the United States as sacrilegious. But in recent months the first faint doubts have begun to be voiced as to whether it is altogether wise to chart the course of a nation of 130,000,000 of people in the midst of a world crisis by the replies to random questions put to an infinitesimal cross-section of the population. President Roosevelt himself started the questioning with his statement, in reference to polls on the war issue conducted by New York and Chicago newspapers, that "of course, anyone would vote against sin."

Those newspaper polls on the question "Shall the United States enter the war to help Britain defeat Hitler?" showed that at the beginning of July between 70 per cent. and 80 per cent. of the American people answered "No," and only 20 per cent. to 30 per cent. "Yes"—a rather confusing result when it is remembered that, in poll after poll, 56 per cent. of those questioned favoured convoying, a step which Americans had been informed by the President would surely lead to war. Wherefore Mark Sullivan, Washington correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune*, remarked: "The spirit of the American people, as expressed in polls, seems to be something like this: 'Do you favour entering the war?' A loud ringing 'No.' 'Do you favour taking steps which would take us into the war?' A loud ringing 'Yes.'"

Further doubts were heard when the Isolationist America First Committee turned up with a brand-new poll on the war issue. In this counting of noses, which was conducted under the direction of President Robert Hutchins of the University of Chicago (and in which all the questions asked were decided upon by Isolationists), the America First Committee carefully refrained from asking any questions on convoys or on whether the Americans favoured entering the war if essential to prevent a British surrender (on the latter question the Gallup polls had shown 68 per cent. of Americans favouring war in those circumstances). Nor did the Isolationists risk a question about whether Americans favoured continuing aid to Britain at the risk of war—another question which had produced overwhelming affirmative majorities in Gallup polls. Instead, this Isolationist test poll contented itself with six questions put to "more than 5,000 individuals"—out of 130,000,000!

On the basis of this minute canvass the America First Committee solemnly informed the American people that they thought as follows: 74 per cent. thought Congress should be the agency to decide whether the United States should take any action likely to result in a shooting war; 66.3 per cent. disapproved of the United States using its armed forces to occupy any part of Africa, the Azores or the Cape Verde Islands; 77 per cent. believed that the United States could not avoid full participation in the war if any part of its armed forces engaged in shooting against Germany; while 58 per cent. favoured going to war "if the Western Hemisphere is attacked"—this latter figure contrasting with a previous Gallup poll indicating that 86 per cent. of the American people were in favour of fighting in case of attack on South America, and 90 per cent. in case of an invasion of Canada.

Following the publication of this Isolationist poll, the *Chicago Daily News*, anxious to be helpful, published a six-question test poll with the aid of which Americans could poll themselves. Here are two of the six questions:

"2. If war seems inevitable in case of a Hitler victory, would you rather fight now, while others are also still fighting Hitler, or later, alone?

"6. In view of the gravity of the national emergency, do you think that the President, elected last November by the people, should step aside, and turn over his responsibilities to a committee composed of Norman Thomas, Senators Wheeler and Nye, Father Coughlin and Charles Lindbergh?"

The same alert newspaper pointed out that, while both the Gallup and Isolationist polls showed a majority of three-to-one against immediately going to war, the Gallup figures revealed that 62 per cent. of the American people feared that, if Hitler wins, he would attack this country; 71 per cent. favoured convoying by the American Navy all the way across if that were the only way to save Britain; 76 per cent. favoured President Roosevelt's foreign policy to date; and 82 per cent. believed that the United States would be in the war before it is over.

Faced with these diametrically conflicting results of seeking political wisdom "at the grass-roots," one can only conclude that what at first appeared a handy and painless method of reaching major decisions on policy without mental strain is not 100 per cent. foolproof, and that these test polls are being overdone.

In a word, to base a decision for, let us say, the American occupation of the Azores, on walking into a drugstore and saying to the assistant behind the counter, "Hey, Bud, do you think we ought to go to the Azores?" may not, after all, be the smartest method of making vital decisions on which the security of the Americas may depend.

I have been assured by some of the best informed Washington columnists, who have access to as much information on war developments as anyone outside official circles in this country, that they would not feel justified in expressing an opinion on some of the questions recently asked in these test polls. And yet, one is frequently informed here that "the President can't do so-and-so because the test polls show that the people are not in favour of the step." The correct answer to which is that, had there been test polls in the good old days, it is reasonably certain that they would have shown a large majority opposed to the North going to war against the South, and against George Washington continuing the "hopeless" fight at Valley Forge!

The Battle of the Test Polls now being fought out across the 3,000 miles of the American continent is not, however, without its unknown heroes. In several recent polls minorities of public-spirited citizens, running as high as 9 per cent., had the courage to reply to questions of high international politics by saying that they didn't know the answer! Which is perhaps the most hopeful sign since this test-poll fever became endemic in these United States.

The fallacy of accepting these polls as a dependable guide to public opinion on any major political question arises out of the virtual impossibility of phrasing questions in such a way that they will not be "weighed" in favour of either an affirmative or a negative answer. In the case of those newspaper polls on the question of the United States entering the war, for instance, the question was: "Shall the United States enter the war to help Britain defeat Hitler?" The *New York Herald Tribune* pointed out that had the question been: "Shall the United States, *for its own protection*, enter the war to help Britain defeat Hitler?" a different result might have been obtained.

In a word, the suspicion grows that these test polls may not, after all, represent the voice of the people, but merely be an indication that at a certain hour on a certain day a certain infinitesimal number of the American people felt that way when a question was suddenly popped under their noses.

A LONDON DIARY

IT is not since Munich that I have met so prevalent a spirit of disquiet and frustration as I do just now. Army and R.A.F. officers have both told me that they believe we could have "done something in the West," that it is true that peasants wave to our aeroplanes in France, and that the German occupying troops are already busy and too few to stop quite serious raids, even if, as they do not believe, a big-scale expedition has been out of the question. Mr. Churchill would be surprised if he could hear the remarks I have heard this week about the "politicians"—all parties included in a single anathema—and the War Office; both remind me unpleasantly of the gossip in France in 1939-40. The people who feel most frustrated are the soldiers themselves. I have not met anyone who can understand the man-power policy; a small mechanised army, people think, combined with the R.A.F. and naval forces, at a time when we have complete air supremacy in the West, could encourage all our Allies on the Continent and put new spirit into the armed forces here. On the other hand, an army of several million men could never invade Europe if Hitler's legions are freed from the East. And if, as Lord Beaverbrook tells us, we are now going to send vast quantities of tanks and equipment to Russia so that Stalin can finish the job, then most of our energy must go into production and there must be no more talk of calling up industrial workers for the Army. Rather we should imitate Hitler and release many thousands of soldiers for industrial purposes.

* * *

Complacent utterances like those of Halifax drive people to fury. All sorts of people say these things to me, not intellectuals and highbrows, but soldiers and shopkeepers in a small town, for instance. From the point of view of confidence and morale the political leadership of the Army is as unfortunate as it can be; Margesson may be an efficient administrator, but nobody can dissociate his name from Chamberlain and Munich, while Lord Croft represents the feelings of this country about as much as Lord Simon. And unfortunately these Ministers and Duncan Sandys all come from one Party, which is all wrong in what is supposed to be a National Government. The change of temperature is unmistakable. The question that was most insistently put to me when I was speaking in Scotland last week was how we were to change the Government, and was a General Election really out of the question? The votes got by "the more savagery to win the war" candidates at recent by-elections are merely symptomatic of irritation, but at Hampstead I see that a Conservative solicitor from the City is to stand on an "all help to Russia" platform. The Lancaster bye-election presents a strange spectacle. The regular Conservative is opposed by a young Liberal who wants many changes, including a more active type of collaboration with Russia. So strong is the feeling, I gather, that Sir Archibald Sinclair hesitates to give the Liberal coupon to the Conservative. The Communists, having promised unreserved support for Churchill, are lined up with the Tory.

* * *

One reason for anger is the popular conviction that the public has been deceived about the Soviet Union. Why was it put about that the U.S.S.R. was no good, that no Russian could be a mechanic—Lord Beaverbrook goes so far as to say that they are as good as any we or the Americans can produce—why, if Stalin is all we now hear, did our Government not accept his invitation to join with him against the Nazis at a time when it would have stopped war, or at least given Hitler a war on two fronts from the outset? Everyone now wants to know about Russia, about the way people really live there—Sir John Russell gave an admirable account of life on a communal farm the other day on the B.B.C.—about the sort of government and organisation this is that produces peasants who so believe in their country that they are prepared to die in hundreds of thousands and burn it up rather than allow the Nazis to use it. The B.B.C. has been excellent in tone and context on Russia—since Hitler's invasion. But people in this mood of anger and curiosity want more than B.B.C. talks. They will eagerly turn to the new edition of the Webbs' immense book on *Soviet Communism*. A large part of the stock of the earlier editions was burnt in the blitz; here are again two huge volumes, on bad paper, but quite readable, with a new and highly provocative Preface by Mrs. Webb who is as positive and fierce at 83 years old as she was when I first knew her twenty odd years ago.

* * *

There was real inspiration in the International Youth rally at the Albert Hall. The internationalism was the genuine article; these groups of Chinese, chanting a miniature pageant of Chinese life; these Polish soldiers singing, magnificently, their nation's songs and also one Scottish tune; these representatives of Britain and Russia and Spain and Austria and Free France and Free Hungary and Czechoslovakia, all pledging their lives (with Free Germans and Italians) to end the tyranny and racial fanaticism of the Nazis—this solidarity, expressed through the language and with the proper differences of various national cultures, was profoundly moving. (The only idiocy I heard about the arrangements—the production was admirably staged by Van Gysegehen—was that the Spaniards were not allowed to display the Republican flag!) There was only one speech, made by Mr. Bevin, who with his usual vigour kept the meeting to realities; the new world which younger generations must play so large a part in building cannot come except through blood and tears. In the background haunting us all were two questions: is there nothing more immediate we can do to help the youth of Russia, which has been rebuilding its own world these last twenty years, nothing we can do except send encouragement to those who all over the Continent are now being shot and tortured for the ideals we meet in the Albert Hall to celebrate? Then comes the second question. That this war has come this way, that the Nazis were armed by British and American capital, that the strategy of this war has been conceived on lines that make us so helpless now—whose fault is this unless that of those who in the last war told us tales of how youth would reconstruct the world when it was over, the Hun crushed and all the rest of it, only themselves to retain power when it was over, and to give back to all the same forces and people who had made 1914 the power and the opportunity to lead us into 1939 and 1941? What are the tactics of a movement that will enable us this time to prevent another grand deception, another monstrous sacrifice of our children and of our children's children?

* * *

I have just been looking through the advance proofs of *Men and Politics*, the title which Louis Fischer gives to his autobiography. It has already scored a notable success in the United States; it should be no less interesting to people in this country. Readers of this journal will remember Fischer as among the best informed of Russian correspondents. He is an American citizen, but has the intimate knowledge of Russia which can only come to a man who is himself of Russian origin, has lived there many years and has standards of comparison with other countries. From Moscow he went to Spain during the Spanish war, and after a short period in this country at the beginning of our war with Germany, went to America to write this book. The book explains why he changed his views about the Soviet regime. Fischer has recently been back in England, not making one of those short trips which include a few broadcasts to tell us how fine we all are, but studying, according to his habit, the lives and thoughts of English people. I find his autobiography fascinating. It includes an account of a 6½-hour interview with Stalin in 1927. He and a group of American visitors were entertained by Stalin from 1 o'clock in the afternoon until 7.15 in the evening.

During all these hours Stalin never left his guests or received a message. He never made an epigram or brilliant remark, but answered every question at length; he "ploughed long and deep," keeping at it until he had got down to the real guts of the matter. He answered questions for four hours; the American delegates, "sitting on the edge of their chairs," waited for the moment when they might thank him for sparing so much of his time and depart. This they tried to do at the end of four hours, but Stalin said "No, no. I have answered your questions. Now you must answer mine." And for two and a quarter hours he asked the questions and they had to answer.

In his broadcast Beaverbrook paid tribute to Stalin's grasp of detail, and I hear that he and Stalin did in fact get on like blood-brothers. Beaverbrook's energy would appeal to Stalin as a pleasant contrast to the qualities of some other British delegates to Moscow.

* * *

I have visited more than one Air Force unit recently; in each case there has been a vehement demand for books. The country is full of units in villages and open country, with no meeting-place or common-room, no movies, few books (often quite unsuitable at that—a "Holiday in Lakeland," "Memoirs of the Hunting-field," and a quickly exhausted handful of thrillers). Often, in fact, there is no distraction whatever for a too abundant leisure. In many, especially, there is almost desperate boredom. I have tried the effect of mentioning Sir Herbert Creedy's appeal. One woman who organised Red Cross hospitals libraries, said that in her view each of the Commands ought to have a whole-time Service librarian. Books should be systematically distributed and changed at the various units. It would mean finding somebody to do the work in each unit, but book-hunger is so acute that this should not be difficult. Books should also be rebound when necessary, as they are for the hospitals by voluntary workers. Simply to distribute books haphazard is of little use. In the first place it is impossible to supply the books really wanted unless there is a systematised channel for sending up demands to the book depots. Secondly, books are easily left about or destroyed: the rapid disappearance of printed, hard-backed volumes is one of the mysteries of modern life. Thirdly, there is an absolute shortage of books approaching, what with the paper scarcity and the author scarcity. No doubt all this is being considered, but it may be hard to persuade the Service Ministers that reading matter is of serious importance to morale.

* * *

One of these days someone will compile an anthology of glorious misprints. The best examples will be found, I think, to come from words misheard in dictation or over the telephone. Thus, I noticed the other day in the programme of the Russian play *Squaring the Circle*, the remark that the drama was "brought fast." By reading this aloud I realised that the producer had intended to tell us that it was "broad farce." This journal has recently contributed two remarkable items for the anthology. I tried to persuade Mr. Wells that his own title for his address at the British Association, "Science and the World Mind," was less good than ours, "Science and the World Wind."

Last week's prize-winner, however, was in the first paragraph of Mr. Joad's article, ironically called *Wartime Culture*, in which Aristophanes was credited with writing two plays called *The Nights* and *The Cows*. And, would you believe it, this paragraph was read in proof by four people, all of whom in youth were forced to a painful accuracy in construing *The Knights* and *The Clouds*. No doubt in middle-age the sub-conscious was taking its subtle revenge.

CRITIC

FORLI SPEECH

"Mussolini, during a trip through Italy to arouse the fallen spirits of the Italian people, was greeted at Forli with anti-Fascist shouts."—*Daily Telegraph*, October 13th.

FRIENDS, Romans, countrymen, give me your cheers;
Since I can't bury Hitler, I must praise him.
Here, under leave of Hitler and the rest,
For Hitler is an honourable man,
Once more I hail victorious Fascismo.
You all do know how on the Brenner Pass,
He thrice demanded ten Imperial Legions,
To wipe up eastern hordes of Bolshevismo,
Which I did thrice refuse. We are ambitious,
The Roman State and people are ambitious,
We rise as one man to defend our Empire,
Our far-flung Fascist Empire of Croatia,
Joint venture of Il Duce and il popolo.
I have annihilated Bolshevismo
In Libya, In Spain and Abyssinia,
The Lion of Judah I pronounced finito
By destined and irrevocable decision!
Our legions, therefore, need not conquer Moscow.
But I am here to speak what I do know,
In Rome must Romans welcome the Gestapo,
(For they are all, all honourable men)
Who walk abroad and recreate themselves
On both sides Tiber; such is my decision,
Lest we inflame them, lest we make them mad.
Such is the dynamism of Axismo,
For destiny has put us on a spotto.
We are invincible in Mare Nostrum,
Abroad we rule, at home by my decree
Not even the stones may rise and mutiny.
(Exit, pursued by cries of Boloney, etc.)

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to R. M. Pointon.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Another irritating feature of the smart-Alec journalism which disfigures THE NEW STATESMAN is the dubious system by which any unscrupulous rogue or mental deficient is encouraged to hope for an easy five shillings by the simple process of sending cuttings from the press to "This England."—"The Student Movement."

The Army has temporarily released Huntsman Harry Roberts to enable him to resume duties with the Plas Machynlleth Foxhounds. The pack was disbanded when Roberts was called up, and farmers have complained of heavy losses of lambs and poultry due to foxes.—*News Chronicle*.

A husband threatened to cut off his wife's head with a carving knife unless she ate some hedgehog which she had prepared for his supper. She ate some. At Leicester matrimonial court yesterday, when the woman alleged cruelty and sought a separation, the magistrates' clerk was puzzled. "I don't know whether this constitutes cruelty or not," he said. "Is a hedgehog edible?" Mr. H. G. Bennett, for the husband, said that in Buckinghamshire hedgehogs provided a favourite dish. "I made her eat half so that her big, ugly sister should not have it," declared the husband.—*Daily Mirror*.

DEBROY SOMERS AND HIS BAND. *V* (. . . —) *Symphony* (Abridged Version). Columbia DX. 1028. One of Beethoven's liveliest works. A grand piece, with victory emphasised throughout.—*The Airscrew*.

Dunkirk was a miracle and so was —— Brand Stomach Powder to me.—Advt., in *Evening News*.

BACKS TO THE LAND

I AM a C.O. working on a farm. Since the Judge asked, down in an air-raid shelter under the Law Courts, "And what do you mean by Christian grounds, Mr. Er—?" I've been in three different jobs, and the only reason I have time to write this is that the corn harvest is over and the root harvest has not yet begun. In a way it's not a bad life; there's something very honest about labouring—but like many honest things, it's sometimes dull for those not brought up in the right tradition. The hours vary from farm to farm, and may be anything from 5.30 a.m. till dark. Those early hours of the morning used to mean stopping at frontiers for Customs inspection, arriving at Dover Harbour, watching eclipses, breakfasting after Commem. Balls. Now they're just part of the regular life.

Farm labourers have to have a dozen trades at their finger-tips, but the disadvantage for the C.O. is that the farmer can usually only entrust him with the foolproof jobs. That's only natural. Farmers obviously don't want to have to engage C.O.s, whom they have to pay at the usual rates, unless they're farmers of the Street-Stapledon-Addison school, who may like to have someone around who doesn't despise books on the Land. On the other hand, the men don't seem to mind working with a C.O. In the jobs I've held, no mention has ever been made of the subject of Conscientious Objection until I referred to it myself, and then it didn't seem any more peculiar to them than if I were, say, a vegetarian. Not one of them attempted to ask the usual questions, though farmhands love arguing. So much for Lord Winterton's contention that farm labourers won't work with pacifists.

Being with them is rather like being with foreigners. There is the same mutual exchange of intriguing information about habits in your country and theirs; and there are times when you badly need an interpreter. But some irritating differences remain. My accent is all wrong—not that it's the kind of "Ebsolutely, old chep" which you hear from brand-new majors knocking back whisky in the local county hotel. My clothes aren't old enough, and I have pale hands, pink-tipped beside theirs. I'm also in unaccountable need of such things as newspapers and magazines and music—and I want to know how the war's going on. Again, while the others are Alf and Len and Joe, although like the Snark I'll answer to "Hi!" or any loud cry, I am still "Mr. Er—."

Sir George Stapledon described the three essential constituents of farming life as "silence, solitude, and contemplation." Sometimes I sits and thinks, in other words, and sometimes I just sits. If you can't just sit, the life is much harder. The solitude of weeding a field alone for three weeks makes one's mind ingrow and inbreed. On the other hand, much of the farming year is intensely beautiful and dramatic. Riding down on one of the rumbling wagons towards my first hay-harvest gave me as great a thrill as I can remember. But the "silence, solitude and contemplation" belong really to the years of peace. Wartime farming seems to make a mockery of them, and the extra acreage to be ploughed and cut is thought of, not in terms of starvation or nourishment next year, but just as a bally nuisance.

Much of the talk on the farm is about money. Farmers seem to talk about money and prices far more than any business men I've ever worked with, and as you'd expect, the men are gradually waking up to this matter of increased wages. They're very indignant about it, and being rightly proud of their work, are particularly sore when they hear that unskilled women war-workers are earning more than the skilled farm labourer. But it never occurs to them to do anything about it, and most of them seem to be unaware that the Agricultural Workers have a Union. The Wages Board which has deferred the question of the £3 wage until November, seems to them as remote and omnipotent as the Royal Household. In time the decree will be promulgated from On High, and they will accept it. No wonder nobody in Whitehall bothers much about it. The relationship between the farmer and his men complicates the matter. The farmer is not only the Boss; he is the Master and the Gaffer. He often does them a little extra service, such as putting in new fittings for their cottages, giving them presents or paying for some minor litigation. In return, the farm-hand often works overtime for nothing, especially if a cow is calving.

The wage is certainly inadequate. A year ago I was paying my own charlady as much as I'm making now, but mine is a special case, and these men have given their whole lives to the land. Particularly unfair is the lack of increase for senior workers, who may, after thirty years' skilled work, be receiving no more than the newly fledged young man. However, I believe that farm labourers would almost prefer an increase in rations to an increase in wages. They certainly need as much food as men in the Services, and the latest increase in canteen allowances is no help to those who have no access to canteens.

It seems obvious that the authorities believe the agricultural workers to be loyal and docile, and probably fear agitation from the *News Chronicle's* Gallup polls and from those interested in the farm-hands' case more than from the men themselves. Until British agriculture is fully nationalised, with the farmer as the Government's bailiff and the farm worker guaranteed an adequate minimum wage and good living conditions, the present unhappy situation will drag on.

B. M.

MATCHLESS

IF one saw the word "matchless" in a poem—in a phrase such as "this matchless world," "this matchless lady," "this matchless June"—one would feel that matchlessness was a highly desirable quality like the incomparableness of Max. To-day, however, to be matchless is by no means to be enviable. The ugliest suburb may in these days be as matchless as the matchless village of peacetime, and the Little Man be as matchless as the modern counterpart of Helen. The truth is, we have reached a pass at which we all know what it is to be matchless or at least to be unable to buy a box of matches.

Pondering on this paradoxical state of affairs, I became inquisitive about the origin of the name of the match we strike on a box, and, on approaching the Brains Trust among my friends, found that none of them could tell me. I then consulted the *New English Dictionary*, which referred to the old French *meche* or *meiche* but declared that "the ulterior etymology is obscure." Some, it is said, have attempted to connect it with the Greek *muxa* and the Latin *mucus*, and in the earliest English use of the word it seems to have meant "the wick of a candle or lamp." Centuries later came the match we all know, "a short, slender piece of wood, wax taper or other material, tipped with some chemical composition which bursts into flame when rubbed on a rough or specially prepared surface (or, as in the earlier contrivances, when brought into contact with some chemical reagent)." The earliest recorded references to this—the match we know—dates only from 1831.

There is, apparently, some doubt as to who invented the match, but the French, claiming that it was one of themselves, celebrated its centenary in 1931. The inventor, they declared, was a M. Charles Saurin, who was still at school when he bestowed on mankind this Promethean novelty. It has been said of his discovery—with some exaggeration—that "no invention has conferred such convenience on the human race." Matches are certainly one of the few inventions that no one has ever been heard to say are a curse to mankind. Most other inventions, from cooking to clothes, from money to motor cars, have been condemned by somebody. The match remains above censure.

Even in childhood, long before we have begun to think of them in terms of convenience, most of us have loved matches. To see a match approaching a gas-jet and bringing forth a flower of flame was an early pleasure, and to be present when a match was put to the fire in a grate was an experience that lifted the spirits in the morning nursery. Such was our love of matches that we had to be warned against playing with them as a peril, and, had it not been for our elders, we might have been burnt to death, when, having got hold of a box, we pretended that a window-catch was a gas-jet and tried to light it, and so set the curtains ablaze.

The chief match of those days was manufactured by Messrs. Bryant and May, and was sold in large boxes with the picture of a tiger on the outside. I do not know what the tiger symbolised; perhaps there was a poet in the firm who remembered Blake's tiger, tiger burning bright. The matches were of a generous size; there was enough wood in each of them to make four modern matches; and the domestic boxes were by no means convenient for carrying in the pocket. Perhaps it was for this reason that many smokers carried wax-vestas, which, though more convenient in their size, must surely have given an odd candle-like flavour to tobacco. Then there were fusees, which sputtered like fireworks and gave out an aroma that delighted the infant nostril. A healthy-minded child would have asked nothing better than to be alone in a room with a box of its father's fusees and to go on striking them till the box was empty. Some people hold that the world has progressed in modern times, but I am inclined to doubt this when I remember that it has allowed haddocks to be chemically cured, and the disappearance of fusees.

As time went on, matches ceased to be mere things of beauty and became necessaries. The growing boy needed them for his cigarettes and his pipe, and to be without matches at the point of a long and lonely peninsula became one's notion of supreme human helplessness. Almost as bad was it to be at the end of a long and lonely peninsula on a stormy day with only one match left in the box. How exultant one felt when, sheltering the match in one's hands, one kept it alight long enough to set the tobacco burning! Such things remain in the memory as excitements of a fairly Golden Age. That was the period, too, at which the young learnt how to strike matches, not on the box, but on the leg of the trousers. There was little sense in this, for it was easier to strike matches on the box, and visible match-trails were left on our new blue trousers; but we felt somehow that by learning to strike matches on the trousers we had been initiated into a new degree of manhood.

Later on, when we became ardent for social reform, matches acquired a new significance. We read appalling stories of the sufferings of workers in the match factories from a disease called phossy-jaw, and we began to look on it as a vice to use any but safety-matches. They were less attractive than the old red-tipped sort and less convenient for carrying loose in the pocket—though it was possible to strike them on a marble mantelpiece or the glass of a window-pane—but they enabled one to smoke with an easier conscience at an age when an easy conscience is not always an easy thing to acquire. Some people say that the modern world has not progressed; but when I think of the triumph of the safety-match I am inclined to doubt this.

Having survived youth and made it a rule never to leave the house without a box of matches in the pocket, we take no other serious interest in matches until our first trip abroad when, having struck a French match for the first time and having felt the impact of its sulphurous fumes on the membranes at the back of our noses, we conclude that we must have arrived in the porch of Gehenna. There is nothing that gives one the sense of foreign travel more than the smell of a French match. I think it was a Bairnsfather drawing that during the last war showed an English soldier at the front striking a French match to light his cigarette and saying to his friend: "These French matches'll be the death of me." If gas-masks had been generally owned forty or fifty years ago I am sure many English people would have taken them with them to France to counter the fumes of the matches. I will not go so far as to say that the Anglo-Saxon is superior to the French civilisation; but at least it has produced a more savoury match.

And how plentifully Anglo-Saxondom took care to provide itself with these good matches! They were so plentiful until recently that, when a beggar on the kerb offered you a box of matches, you gave him a penny or twopence and never dreamed of taking one of his boxes unless at the moment you genuinely needed it. In America, so far as I could see, they simply give matches away. I constantly found myself, when I bought a packet of cheap cigarettes, being given two booklets of matches for nothing. What an Arcadia such a world seems to us now when, if we ask for a box of matches in a shop, we are laughed at as would-be wags or eccentrics! If a beggar appeared in the street with a tray of matches in these days, queues would form up for his favours. He would be an object, not of charity, but of humble reverence; and it is we who should be the beggars.

Many people, it is true, make up for the shortage of matches by carrying petrol-lighters, but I have never cared for these new-fangled devices. My own method of countering the match shortage is to light one match after breakfast for my first cigarette and thereafter to light one cigarette from the butt of the previous one and so on till bed-time. It is astonishing how many matches one can save if one smokes enough cigarettes. This is a form of economy I can commend to those who, like myself, have a taste for parsimony.

As an economist, I cannot help wishing, however, that I knew where to obtain that "everlasting match" which an Austrian chemist was said to have invented some years ago. "It is," we were told, "of stone-like material, as long as an ordinary match, but somewhat thicker. It burns without smoke or smell, is easily extinguishable, and may be used about 600 times. A larger size can be used up to 2,000 times. A match that can be ignited 600 times costs about the same as an ordinary match." What, I wonder, became of this invention? Was it ever put on the market? It was said at the time that the chemist had refused £555,000 for the patent; but I have never met anyone who possessed this magical incendiary. A match that could be lit 2,000 times! Why, it would last me nearly six years.

Meanwhile, I think it would be not a bad thing if the authorities rationed matches and allowed only a very small portion of them to non-smokers, who deserve to be penalised by some means or other for eluding taxation. To the non-smoker a match is little more than a convenience. To the smoker it is indispensable—as indispensable almost as tobacco itself.

Y. Y.

THE MOVIES

"49th Parallel" at the Odeon.

"Lady Be Good," at the Empire.

"The Night of January 16th," at the Plaza.

After *Citizen Kane*, seen a second time, everything looks flat. *49th Parallel* is an adventure story, and a bit more. The bit more interests me, because it makes and mars. Six survivors from the crew of a sunk Nazi submarine fighting their way across Canada towards the border and dropping out one by one—there's the story. Such tales of escape are not uncommon in wartime, when every hill in enemy territory becomes a Himalaya and every trout stream an unexplored Amazon; every day we are thrilled to read in the newspapers of French schoolboys crossing the Channel in a canoe, Polish soldiers who have struggled half across Europe to freedom. Possibly we should be less thrilled by similar feats of the Nazis, but still our response would be to adventure and not to patriotism, the hero would be the pursued. The difficulty, then, of *49th Parallel* is that the natural heroes of its adventures are the campaigning Nazis. The further they get and the more hardships they have to undergo, the more inclined shall we be to sympathise. Our sympathies are checked in a number of ways. Before the submarine is sunk, we are shown scenes of its last victim, a tanker crew left in an open boat to drown; and the brutalities of "total warfare" accompany the overland trek of the escaping Nazis. They shoot their way through a happy looking outpost of Lapps, batter a French-Canadian trapper to death, execute one of their own crew who tries to join a peaceful settlement of Hutterites, and even keep four bullets for Leslie Howard, writing about Indian customs and cherishing a Picasso in a tent in the Rockies. With each new episode the argument between Hitlerism and Democracy turns another page; the innately peaceful countryside, splendidly photographed and extending over a thousand miles of cornland and mountain, is Democracy's trump card, and its half-dozen invaders are made to look like cobras in a Surrey garden. This, with Mr. Howard's cool-card act and Mr. Raymond Massey waiting in his shirt tails to knock out the last Nazi, carries the film successfully to its end. More or less successfully. *49th Parallel* doesn't go with a bang like *Pimpernel Smith*, and it isn't single-minded enough to be continuously exciting. However, if the case for Democracy, a thrilling adventure, a constellation of actors (Laurence Olivier and Eric Portman must be added to those mentioned), and a landscape album can be all crammed into one film, here it is.

The Night of January 16th is a lively and unconvincing thriller whose chief distinction is that it is based on a play with two endings. Audiences, apparently, were invited at the end of the trial scene to give a verdict and the appropriate ending followed. The film, unfortunately, has had to make do with one ending, and we seem to miss the fun. *Lady Be Good* is a musical comedy about people writing musical comedy. It has two very good cabaret acts, one by the coloured Berry Brothers and the other by the new poker-faced singer, Virginia O'Brien. Eleanor Powell dances by herself and with a dog. Ann Sothern sings Gershwin's tunes. Robert Young sits at a piano composing them. It takes close on two hours.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Civil Defence Artists, at the Cooling Gallery.

The Maurice Ingram Collection, at the Redfern.

The purpose of the exhibition at the Cooling Gallery is not to illustrate Civil Defence activities, but to offer artists serving in Civil Defence an opportunity of showing their work. Naturally, some of these have chosen to submit paintings and drawings inspired by their new employments. An artist, for instance, who has joined the N.F.S., is likely to attempt flame-scapes. Among the artists represented are several who are familiar to habitual patrons of art-exhibitions, such as Eve Kirk, Vera Cuningham, Stephen Bone, C. R. W. Nevinson, R. V. Pitchforth, and Kenneth Martin. Of the painters whose work seems unfamiliar the most interesting to us is Denis Mathews, who shows a most charming and accomplished portrait and a well managed scene of devastation. Leonard Rosoman has previously shown a number of fire pictures, but the two watercolours of Normandy give one a much better opinion of his talent, in which there is a Vuillard-like quickness to catch an unexpected aspect. Elizabeth Watson's "After being burned in Holborn Circus," Vera Cuningham's "Devastation" and Samson Schames's "Church Window" are the best of the war-pictures. This exhibition, it is hoped, is the first of a series, which may encourage artists in the Civil Defence services to persist in their vocation.

Twelve of the late Mr. Ingram's pictures were not available for the Redfern Show, and we may assume that these were its gems: the Vuillard reproduced in the catalogue looks lovely. What we are given is disappointing and puzzling. Usually a private collection is an interesting reflection of a personal fate, but no such clue is apparent in this miscellaneous assembly. The Matthew Smith landscapes are some of the worst works of a good artist, the only Duncan Grant is an uncommonly poor specimen. The Etty, however, is most admirable, and there are very pleasant works by Sickert, Derwent Lees, Ethel Walker and Moynihan.

Correspondence

PRODUCTION AND THE WAR

Sir,—Your correspondent should remember the small boy who sought to teach his grandmother to suck eggs. He writes:

> "Factories should work seven days a week, arranging things so that the workers do six days; not, you would think, an impossible arrangement for intelligent men to devise."

As a matter of fact it *is* an impossibility.

Consider an engineering machine shop with every machine tool (as it should be) in production. A week contains 168 hours; of these, 21 must be allowed for meal times, so that the maximum possible hours per week the machines could operate are 147. These 147 hours could be worked in three shifts of 49 hours each. This would be a short working week for each worker. To-day the overriding condition is the shortage of labour and it is important that each operator should work the optimum period generally accepted as about 54 hours per week. However, this three-shift system would entail a seven-day working week and is therefore inadmissible. An approximation may be reached by a two-shift system but with that the maximum machine hours cannot be obtained and the workpeople have a seven-day week every alternate week.

I would suggest your correspondent exercises his ingenuity in devising a works' time-table which would provide a 54-hour 6-day working week with the machines running 147 hours. It should take into account difficulties of staggered hours and travelling in the black-out with inflexible railway and bus time-tables, together with the natural desire of married men to sleep at home some nights in each week and a minimum break between shifts of 12 hours.

I hold no brief for the particular works mentioned, but I should be very surprised if their alleged action in putting an end to Sunday work was not motivated by the desire to increase output.

As I am engaged in similar work, I suppose I shall be classed as a prejudiced witness, but I do not believe that managerial incompetence is a main cause of our undoubted failure to attain maximum output. To secure the full co-operation of the workers is the chief preoccupation of all works executives at the present moment. If it can be attained by some of the methods advocated in your correspondent's article then I, for one, should not object to their adoption; with the proviso, however, that I should not have to neglect my usual work to explain the hundred and one decisions I have to take each day.

One of the causes of failure to attain maximum output is the want of a consistent wages policy. It is not necessary to quote the iniquities of the "cost-plus" system to see how it works out. It is not generally appreciated how low the productive wages (expressed as a percentage of total cost) are in many engineering works. This is due to the specialisation of much engineering work. Thus cost of material is often above 50 per cent. of total cost and cost of productive labour as low as 15 per cent.; the remainder consists of non-productive labour, drawing office salaries, fixed charges, etc. Thus an unscrupulous firm (even when carrying out a fixed-price contract) can afford to save itself the trouble of training new personnel by allowing it to be known among its neighbours that wages higher than the standard rates and piecework bonuses may be obtained by transferring. Even if workpeople are not enticed away, they become disgruntled and production suffers.

This kind of thing goes on continually and I have no hesitation in saying it is the chief cause of failure to attain maximum output.

It is, of course, well known that the Government funks laying down a wages policy. It prefers to leave wages to be settled by the well-tried system of negotiation between the trade unions of both sides. This, at this juncture, is about as sensible as leaving the price of bread and meat to be settled by the well-tried system of free competition.

It must not be assumed from anything that I have written that our workshops and workers have not made a good war effort. I should be the last to deny that, but I must say that if we could really go all out we should do much better; and to win the war we must do so.

Hitherto, in peacetime, we have relied on the monetary incentive to increase effort, viz., payment by results and the like. For various reasons these incentives to-day have largely lost their effectiveness and we must seek others. Some men and women in our factories are sadly lacking in imagination. They cannot connect their particular job with the national effort. Even if they do, they do not think that what they themselves can perform makes much, if any, difference. In other words, there is a want of trust between the workpeople and the managements. The diminution of this distrust will certainly not be helped by your correspondent's article. If your correspondent really knows of a firm using Government priorities for such purposes as he mentions (which I myself very much doubt) there are avenues he could explore to try to stop it without blazoning it in the public press.

Sutton Coldfield. C. C. Garrard

HUMAN PLANNING

Sir,—As Mr. Harrisson's observations covered a wide field, I confine myself to a brief comment upon only two of his points, namely, that the much-lauded new tenement blocks are definitely unpopular with the vast majority of their occupants; and, secondly, that in the inter-war period, although there has been so much of what is called "housing reform," it is questionable whether the people affected by it are really happier than they were before, while, indeed there is evidence of a decline in that public spirit and sociability which were fostered in the old-fashioned streets condemned by our town-planning experts. Mr. Harrisson's accusation that the latter have shown a marked lack of sensitiveness in their dealing with the human aspect of planning is well justified.

One of the worst offenders in this respect is Professor Gropius, who has exerted, and still exerts, a considerable influence upon housing policy in this country by his well-known argument that, given a certain total of housing accommodation to be provided on a site, it is advantageous to erect buildings of many storeys because by this means the proportion of ground unbuilt on and therefore available for recreational space is increased. But the professor, in making this elementary mathematical calculation, ignores the fact, obvious to anybody with a sense of human values, that the usefulness of land as recreational space is dependent upon the degree of its accessibility. To a working man's wife with three or four children a small private backyard on ground level supplemented by a street playground just outside the front door is worth more than an acre of garden five flights of stairs below her dwelling.

But as a rule the bureaucrat who sanctions the building of tenement blocks acknowledges their unsuitability for family life, but pleads that he is compelled to accept this form of development because it is not possible to plan self-contained cottages of good accommodation and with adequate sunlight in the rooms at a high enough density per acre to admit of their being erected on costly sites in the built-up areas of our towns. Researches conducted by the Hundred New Towns Association, however, have shown conclusively that houses exemplifying the highest standard of accommodation recommended by the Ministry of Health can be laid out at densities per acre comparable to that of the tenements. That housing officials of Local Authorities have failed to investigate the possibility of this practical alternative to the tenements is due to the veto imposed by those experts of Garden City persuasion who have caused to be placed upon the statute book a regulation prescribing a maximum density of 12 houses to the acre even where land is very expensive.

This ill-conceived regulation is also largely responsible for the lack of sociability which Mr. Tom Harrisson, in company with other observers, finds to be characteristic of so many of the new housing estates. The standardised "open development" of houses in small detached units, which is there insisted upon, is a direct encouragement to snobbery. On the other hand, the street formation is the architectural expression of sociability. It is democratic *and* aristocratic in the best sense of these words. There was a time when princes, statesmen and great merchants lived by preference in street houses. The working classes of England, in also favouring this type of habitation, show a sound instinct and a better understanding of civic art than is possessed by some of our town-planning and housing "experts." In the rebuilding of Britain we may look to the working classes to support a revival of street building of the best kind not only in existing towns, but in such new towns as may need to be planned when the bombardment comes to an end. A. Trystan Edwards

The Hundred New Towns Association.

DEMOCRACY IN THE ARMY

Sir,—David Scott may comfort himself. Things are very much less bad than he has worked himself up to believe.

Nearly all officers who are now being commissioned have passed through the ranks. The rule is only relaxed in an exceptional case to meet an exceptional and urgent need. Commanding officers of all units have it impressed upon them that it is part of their duty to send forward suitable candidates without regard to a man's parentage or his school, or any other social irrelevancy. The qualification to which most weight is given is meritorious active service. A few C.O.s amongst many thousands are, no doubt, influenced by old-fashioned ideas, but their prejudices do not escape detection and rebuke. At the Officer Cadet Training Units men are judged on their merits. If a cadet has not in him the stuff which makes a good leader, the fact that he is Eton, Oxford and the Carlton Club does not save him. Back he goes to his colonel and, if there are too many returns, the colonel has to explain. At any time the cadets in any O.C.T.U. are drawn from every class of society and have every kind of family, school and calling. The large majority, who pass out with commissions, are fairly representative of the whole British people. Amongst the 20 per cent. who fail also, there are members of every class. The Army in October, 1941, is more democratic than it has ever been. What is more, it is not only free from class prejudices in the selection of its officers, it is not concerned with class distinctions in its workings. The men know that always more of their officers have served in the ranks. Many of them have the expectation of becoming officers themselves before long. During the past year the Army has grown noticeably closer-knit. All ranks understand each other better, have fuller confidence in one another, and are more friendly.

Of course, there is unfairness in the fact that the man with a good education stands a better chance of being chosen than the man with a poor education. This means an advantage to the rich and the well-to-do. But the blame rests with the social system, not with the Army. The Army can only accept things as they are, and prefer the officer who is well equipped to the officer whose equipment is less adequate. Still, most complaints about failures to obtain commissions, and those the loudest, come from disappointed candidates, or their families, who cannot understand how impeccable connections and the best of schools have failed to command acceptance.

A Soldier in Two Wars

RELIGION IN RUSSIA

Sir,—Even the orthodox might appreciate that if "faith," and the letter be denied, Soviet "works" may incorporate the spirit of ethical religion. Nevertheless, the fundamental criticism is surely that whilst the U.S.S.R. permits the existence of religious sects it has failed fully to appreciate the merits of positive spiritual freedom. It rejected the thesis: "Ideally speaking, it is wrong to fetter a child's mind with the dogmas of either camp," and not merely excluded religious teaching from schools, but sought to impose atheism. In insisting on Bolshevik Marxism as the only legitimate philosophy, it thus imitated the pernicious error of ecclesiastical tyranny.

This, however, should not obscure either essential and, indeed, spiritual Soviet achievements or the hopeful opportunity of both Britain and Russia ultimately interchanging and assimilating respective values whether in "faith" or "works."

After all, both have now accepted the Atlantic Charter, and this could have profound mutual consequences if circumstances are propitious and the present necessitous alliance can generate genuine friendship and dissolve intellectual bigotry.

REGINALD SORENSEN

BOOKS FOR THE FORCES

SIR,—The provision of recreational reading matter for the Forces was recognised at the outbreak of war as a matter of prime importance, and at the request of the three Services the Lord Mayor's Service Libraries and Books Fund was formed to collect books, magazines and periodicals for this purpose.

Gifts of books and magazines from the public, supplemented with others purchased in the market have enabled my Fund to hand over 10,000,000 to the Services Central Book Depot for distribution. Permanent stations of the Army and Air Force at home and overseas, small isolated units at home, beach troops, anti-aircraft posts, and overseas field and lines of communication units both of the Army and the Royal Air Force have all had their share of these books. Each transport is given a supply, and each large ship of the Royal Navy has a library on board. The smaller ships are supplied with books by the Royal Naval War Libraries.

Instructions have been issued to members of all three Services detailing how they may obtain a supply of books, and at the present time no member of any one of the three Services need be at a loss for "something to read." Conditions, however, have changed very materially lately, and owing to the falling away in the number of books contributed by members of the public, and to the paper shortage which has seriously affected the number of books available for purchase, supplies are likely to become inadequate to meet all demands.

There is little doubt also that our difficulties in meeting demands are likely to increase in the future, but it is hoped that with the continued help of the Librarians and with further generous support from members of the public in handing in their spare books at post offices, my Fund will be able to meet these demands. The Librarians, we know, will continue to do their utmost to help in this all-important work, but unless we are also able to rely on continued support from members of the public, we shall fail in our task.

May I ask those of your readers who have books to spare to hand them in, unwrapped, unstamped and unaddressed, at their nearest Post Office, and may I also add that copies of magazines and periodicals to which your readers subscribe are, when finished with, also gratefully accepted.

HERBERT CREEDY,
Deputy-Chairman

WARTIME CULTURE

SIR,—*Have* past wars usually given rise to distinctive cultural expression, as Professor Joad implied in your columns last week? An interesting subject for research. As regards modern war, in which not merely armies and civilians in battle areas, but whole peoples, are influenced, if not directly affected, by turmoil and propaganda, cultural inhibition is perhaps to be expected.

And the case of popular songs? In the first place, the jazz song is no more to be specifically associated with this war than the music-hall song was with the last: it just happened that they were the current types when the wars began. Secondly, U.S.A. sets the fashion and the pace nowadays; the fashion is sentimental love and the pace is—well, terrific; for every song popularised in 1914 dozens are popularised and depopularised to-day: consequently not even "Lambeth Walk" has had the chance to achieve the fame or endurance of "Gilbert the Filbert." Finally, I suggest that Professor Joad's nose-in-the-air disdain of modern jazz is a bit overdone: acknowledgment of the musical offensiveness and lyrical fatuity of the bulk of radio-revue stuff does not blind me, at least, to the merits of that portion of jazz, the composers, arrangers and executors of which can only be debarred from the ranks of artists by defining Art in terms so hopelessly academic that misgivings would be occasioned even in a philosopher.

N. T. GRIDGEMAN

THE FOOD PROBLEM

SIR,—The article in your journal dated September 27th indicts catering establishments and hotels for buying in the Black Market at prices above the control.

Whilst we feel every sympathy towards the general sentiments expressed in the article, we deprecate as strongly as possible any such sweeping and derogatory general statements about a whole class who, by the very vagueness of its definition, is quite unable to defend itself by any action.

Speaking for the many members of my Association, even if there may be here and there a black sheep, in the main there is no doubt whatever that instead of being Black Market supporters, they are an extraordinarily harassed, hard-working, understaffed class, subject also to numerous hardships arising from the unfair incidence of rationing on their establishments.

E. J. ANDREWS,
General Secretary, The Residential Hotels Association.

DUBLIN IN WARTIME

SIR,—In connection with Mr. Bridie's reference to the prohibition in Dublin of Lennox Robinson's version of *Boule de Suif*, it should be stated that the play was produced by the Hilton-Edwards Company at the Gate Theatre, and not by the Abbey Theatre. It had a three days' run; on the third the veto of the Government was announced shortly before the curtain was due to rise, and in order not to disappoint the audience it was decided to refund the admission money and proceed with a private performance of the play. The Abbey Theatre, of which Mr. Robinson is a director, concerns itself only with plays of Irish interest; there would have been quite a big sensation indeed if the Abbey had actually put on *Boule de Suif*.

M. HICKEY

ARTISTS OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY

SIR,—On Saturday and Sunday, October 25 and 26, we are holding an exhibition of "Artists of the People's Army." It will include popular prints, cartoons, posters, etc., from the Thirty Years' War, the French Revolution, the Paris Commune, the Napoleonic invasion of Russia, the Russian Revolution, the Spanish, Chinese and the first and second World Wars. The proceeds of the exhibition will go to the International Brigade Association, to help secure the release of International Brigaders now in France.

We should be most grateful if any of your readers could loan us material for these two days. We should especially welcome posters, cartoons and prints (photographic or original) dating from the last war and the Russian Revolution, and also any material from the present war that could be included in our general theme.

H. A. BONNINGTON
45, Downshire Hill, Hampstead, N.W.3.

CLOTHES RATIONING

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JONATHAN CAPE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THOSE who have abandoned themselves to what Mr. Pearsall Smith calls "that unpunished vice, reading," can, for four guineas a year, indulge all the caprices of their libertinage: the London Library is a Venusberg at their disposal. When I go there for some book that will help me with what I am writing, I find myself seduced by rank upon rank of Flower Maidens. I hesitated last week between the rival allurements of Grant Duff's Diaries and the Abbé Galiani's letters; Constance Kent beckoned to me to show that her pretty hands were not those of a fratricide; I felt a sudden itch for a more intimate acquaintance with the natives of Tierra del Fuego and the aesthetic theories of the Quatrocento; George Sand offered to confide in me of her passion for Marie Dorval; in the *corps de ballet* of French novels, old loves competed with untasted beauties for my attention; I succumbed to the Life of a Victorian ecclesiastic—and finally I staggered into St. James's Square laden with my miscellaneous spoils. After some twenty-five years of such unsystematic reading one should be able to bore any company down with one's accumulated information. But, alas, only an occasional fact and a haze of vague impressions remain with me. The mussel swallows a ton of water a day—or is it two tons—to keep itself nourished, and similarly the ocean of print that passes before my eyes leaves my knowledge little larger than it was. Such reading, like the other vices, serves little purpose except to give immediate pleasure.

* * *

But reading for reading's sake sometimes provides enjoyable coincidences. On Friday, for instance, I was delighting in an essay by Emile Faguet on the correspondence between John Stuart Mill and Auguste Comte. (Faguet is to my mind a much underrated critic: dismissed as a rule by his compatriots as merely academic, he seems to me as witty and worldly-wise as he is erudite.) In this essay I was struck by a remark of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's: "Vous ne m'aimez donc pas? Vous ne me dites jamais de bien de vous." The following day I came across the same remark, in Sainte-Beuve's essay on Grimm—who was probably the friend to whom Rousseau was complaining. Expansive, self-centred persons usually do not notice the reserve of their acquaintances, but Rousseau was not only morbidly suspicious but extraordinarily acute. Usually, moreover, we find that people talk too much about themselves and too little about us. Yet the complaint was well founded. Rousseau would have boasted to a crossing-sweeper, but I fancy that most of us try to conceal our vanity no less than our other faults from those for whom we feel little sympathy. A close friend of mine once decided to banish the word "I" from his vocabulary: when asked what he had been doing, he always brushed the question aside as of no interest. One was duly impressed by his asceticism, but the bonds of friendship began to loosen. According to Chamfort, "L'amour, tel qu'il existe dans la société n'est que l'échange de deux fantaisies et le contact de deux épidermes." Perhaps friendship cannot survive without the contact of two vanities. In any case, I am determined henceforward not to hurt any friend's feelings and to boast more than ever.

* * *

Another lucky dip. After reading with intense enjoyment Professor Gooch's book on Nineteenth Century Historians, I took from the London Library the letters of one of these historians, Dean Merivale. He was a Cambridge friend of Tennyson's, and recited his Prize poem *Timbuctoo* at the congregation, the poet being too shy to do so himself. I was amused to find him writing in 1866, "Would that I were young now as I was then (1831), and had the smallest faith in the future of England." But the comment that struck me most was made during the Crimean War: "I feel it is some satisfaction to think that if the whole of the Queen's Army, horse and foot, were cut off to-morrow, it would not put me personally into mourning. Such is the privilege of belonging to the middle classes." This immunity of the English *bourgeoisie* from active participation in warfare must have lasted throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the fact had never occurred to me. It helps to explain the recurring fits of Jingoism to which the electorate was prone, and in particular the popularity of Palmerston. In the same book, on a piece of paper left in it by another subscriber, I found an amusing note which I hope he will forgive me for stealing from him. It concerns the famous Cambridge society called The Apostles, to which Tennyson and his friends belonged:

> The Apostles would never spell Oxford with a capital O, and Venables made a famous remark: "I often wonder what we have done to deserve being gifted so much above those cursed idiotic Oxford brutes." Uttered with the slow utterance and characteristic lisp, his mind not in the least engaged with the fact of Cambridge superiority—which was far too matter of course a thing to dwell upon—but solely with speculation upon the cause.

John Morley made a habit of writing "god" without a capital G, but I fancy that we Oxford chaps are too self-satisfied to bother with writing "cambridge."

* * *

Third dip. I was reading an anthology of English poetry about Italy. Too much space was given to the scented feeble verses of John Addington Symonds, but Shelley and, above all, Browning plunged me into the depths of nostalgia. (In Venice this is the loveliest of months, barges laden with grapes and gourds, the sunsets at the peak of their plumage.) Suddenly I came on a poem I did not know called *Roman Women*, by T. E. Brown. Were anthologists perhaps grossly unfair to the author of "A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!" I hastened to the London Library to discover. I found little to enjoy. Brown is alternatively hearty and arch—a repulsive combination, and *Roman Women*, though not free from these vices, is the best thing he wrote. It begins: "Close by the Mamertine Her eyes swooped into mine"—the verb shows Brown's customary absence of taste. But the description of the girl is vigorous:

> The tiger spring
> Is there; the naked strife
> Of sinewy gladiators, knife
> Slant-urged, Locusta drugs,
> Suburran rangings, Messalina hugs:
> Neronic crapula-pangs
> I' the dizzy morning; gangs
> Of captives: "Pretty men enough,
> Eh, Livia?" Puff
> Of lecherous torches; ooze
> Of gutter-creeping gore; the booze
> Gnathic, Trimalchian; hot hiss
> Of *leno* in the lobby . . .

A contrast is provided by a meeting with a visiting Englishwoman whose cold propriety appals him. "Her I must love, but you I never can, Unlovely woman on the Pincian." The poem has some three hundred lines, and ends with a passage that loses much of its merit when separated from the lines preparing for it:

> And how the progress of our civilisation

(Is there a flatter line in English poetry?)

> And how the progress of our civilisation
> Has made you quite so terrible
> It boots not ask; for still
> You gave us stalwart scions,
> Suckled the young sea-lions,
> And smiled infrequent, glacial smiles
> Upon the sulky isles—
> For this and all His mercies—stay at home!
> Here are the passion-flowers!
> Here are the sunny hours!
> O Pincian woman, do not come to Rome!

Here from the same pen is a pleasing conceit—Brown evidently frequented George Herbert as well as Browning and Coventry Patmore: subject, the dingy waters of the Bristol Channel.

> This sea was Lazarus, all day
> At Dives' gate he lay,
> And lapped the crumbs.
> Night comes;
> The beggar dies—
> Forthwith the Channel, coast to coast,
> Is Abraham's bosom; and the beggar lies
> A lovely ghost.

* * *

Last dip, a recent book, Professor Susan Stebbing's *Ideals and Illusions* (Watts, 8s. 6d.), which I have enjoyed prodigiously. This is at once a critique of confused thinking and an exposition of a rational ethical system revealing what seems to me a very sure judgment of values. Mr. Stephen Spender, reviewing it a few weeks ago in these columns, pointed out justly enough that behind confused thinking there might be a valid view. But the point, as I see it, is that the best test of a view is how it stands up to clear exposition. The Nazi philosophy, for instance, is so irrational and so vile that stripped of rhetoric it could be accepted only by moral idiots. For this reason it never is so stripped except by its opponents. On the other hand, the liberal philosophy, presented naked, as by Professor Stebbing, remains acceptable. There are, however, two points I should like to raise. Like almost all "progressive" intellectuals, she seems to assume that the great majority of human beings are potentially capable of enjoying the arduous exercise of their intellects and aesthetic sensibilities. I should like to believe that this assumption was true, but I see no grounds for it, and I think that to make this the basis of one's preference for democracy is rather dangerous. Secondly, while basing her ethical system on utilitarianism—wisely, I think, because a system based upon states of mind is impracticable—Professor Stebbing does not discuss the alteration effected by modern psychology in our concepts of pleasure and pain. Masochism in its moral if not in its physical form is not uncommon: is it then good or bad to indulge other people's desire for what we call pain, and they experience as pleasure? Let me put it more generally. Bentham and Mill, I suspect, would have assumed that fear was an emotion causing pain; yet observation suggests that while acute fear is most painful, fear up to a certain degree of intensity causes pleasure. Hunting, skiing, mountain-climbing, motoring, flying, even going on a switchback, are pleasures that would lose much of their savour if all sense of risk were absent. Does not even an air-raid excite noticeable exhilaration in a number of those exposed to its dangers? It is significant that war reduces by anything up to 60 per cent. the suicide rate. Many if not most people are glad of any stimulus that does not pass a certain degree of violence, and although pleasure and pain remain necessary concepts, the moralist needs to consider also stimulation and non-stimulation. I wish that someone as clear-headed as Professor Stebbing would study the application of the Utilitarian theory as modified by our increased knowledge of the complicated human heart.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

A POLISH STORYTELLER

Tales of the Tatras. By KAZIMIERZ PRZERWA-TETMAJER. Translated from the Polish by H. E. Kennedy and Zofia Umińska. Foreword by Wm. John Rose. *Minerva Press, 7s. 6d.*

The peaks of the Tatras are well known to tourists who have crossed the Carpathians from Poland into Slovakia on the route from Cracow to Zakopane. Writers, artists, the Polish elite, had discovered this region and its primitive mountaineers before the last war, and there was a summer colony at Zakopane, a sort of Central European Capri, where figures like Pilsudski, Paderewski, Sienkiewicz (of *Quo Vadis?*) and Conrad, met and stayed. In these wild mountains, far removed from the growing cosmopolitanism of the West, the Young Poland movement discovered a romantic inspiration, and from this soil sprang one writer who became a national idol, the poet and story-teller, Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer. Last year his starved and ragged body was picked up in the ruins of Warsaw. The writers and artists had gone to look at the mountains, the tourists had gathered to look at the writers and artists; now all have been swept away, in ghostly parody, by the totalitarian tourists who have turned the resorts of Europe into gaols.

Dr. Wm. Rose does not give one very much information about the Tatras or about Przerwa-Tetmajer, in the introduction to this book, but he gives enough to show that, in the Polish story-teller's career, there is a miniature of the European process during the last two generations. He was born in 1865. The revival of the small national cultures in Europe since that time, in the Scandinavian countries, in Ireland, Catalonia, and the new States of Central Europe, brought something racy, innocent, vigorous and eagerly local to the main European stream; but looking back on those movements now, speculating, too, upon their future, one wonders how much of their energy was, after all, the last fling of the dying peasant. Our ignorance of Polish literature is great, and therefore we must not generalise; but in the peasant tales of Tetmajer, one catches something of the valedictory note of Synge, a nostalgia which foretells the dying of a race. The irony is that, in dying, the peasant has unwittingly left the poison of a spurious primitivism in the European system, and that the small nations have been crushed, for the moment, by a nation which uses the machine more ruthlessly than it has ever been used before in the name of things like race, myth, magic and primitive mysticism, which the peasant knew in his bones.

This is a long detour to the world of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer. His *Tales of the Tatras* are at least the real thing in their own *genre*, and though they are written by a man who had left the mountains in his youth and who returned to write after he had been jaded by "the cities of the plain," there is none of that mystical windiness with which townees like D. H. Lawrence or Jean Giono inflate their characters and their scenery. Tetmajer's people are the mountain folk presented by a lyrical poet, and not by a lyrical preacher. They keep the cattle in the high pastures. They become robbers. They love, murder and avenge. They fight the Carpathian bear and the snow. They die without complaint, like animals. Their piety is strong, amoral and naive. Their humour is a private drollery. Their morality is based on respect of the superhuman logic of the passions. They worship pride and strength as children worship them. The spirit of their tales is illustrated by Smas, the robber. He has got better after a bad sickness, and is so astonished by his recovery that he agrees to go to a priest and confess his sins:

> "I won't keep you long," Smas said, "for I see so many folk waiting. The gossips have been teaching me what sins are. Neither a bushel nor even a quarter have I; so listen! Rob I did, but I gave the poor the booty. More than one I have hung so high that his head nearly came out above the trees, so tall he grew! But that I never did on our side of the mountains, only over in Hungary. Fought I have, but I never attacked a weakling. Once only a wretch, miserably small he was, came from the army and hit me on the head. Then—I beg your Reverence's pardon—I clasped him round the stomach and the neck, turned him upside down, stuck him among the branches, head downwards, and went away. I wouldn't touch the thing. . . . No man have I defamed and betrayed; I've kept faith always, both when we robbed and when we hid the booty, and when we agreed on a raid or otherwise. . . . Killed a man I have, but not needlessly—There! In the end it had to be, for fight they would! And you know yourself how it is—a robber hasn't much time to waste when he's robbing. I've forgotten if 'twas two or three that I killed—'twas so long ago."

The *Tales of the Tatras* illustrate the difference between tales and what we call short stories. There is nothing anecdotal about the tales; even when they are not telling the whole of a life story, they convey an impression of doing so, because they deal with the elemental things of living; the despairs of love and its illusions, the sadistic triumphs of jealousy, the onset of death settling old quarrels, the fight for survival. This will sound very simple. But the author inherits the subtlety of the peasant, an instinctive knowledge of the problems of illusion and reality which the psychological novelist puts in more complex language. A cold neurotic girl is seen truthfully, for all the lack of elaborate analysis; the arrested development of artists is portrayed in allegory and with the fineness of touch which one meets in the tales of Hans Andersen. Again and again, in these vigorous peasant carvings, one sees the complex situations of the modern psychological novel reduced to the simple facts which civilisation has elaborated. Malaise is cut away like brushwood until the passions are revealed, and in a story like *Krystka*, a tale of jealousy and vengeance, the drama does not lose its reality for us because of its primitive sadism and violent power, for Tetmajer puts these people in their own terms.

Peasant literature is boring when we are aware of the writer as an observer from the outside, when the local is being written up simply to show it is picturesque. Tetmajer, on the contrary, writes from the middle of his subjects; he has the power of individualising universal themes. The reader has not the impression of being a tourist. There is also a gleam of humour in Tetmajer's work which comes out delightfully in such stories as the one about the fiddler who had to be persuaded to leave Heaven because he demoralised the angels and delighted God himself with his songs about robbers and passionate love. Nobody wanted to sing the hymns. It is typical of Tetmajer's serenity of mind that this story ends without cynicism or irony, but with a homely poetry. One is always left with a sense of the permanence of the human heart. It was this quality of serenity of thought and feeling, of something unselfconscious and sound as an apple, which distinguished the literature of the small countries and especially their folk literature. Tetmajer must have heard many of these tales in the Tatras, and they had been made into works of art before he picked them up, by generations of people. If civilisation breaks up, one supposes that art and literature will hide once more in the anonymous hands and tongues of the ordinary folk.

V. S. PRITCHETT

IS SCIENCE SPECIAL?

The Scientific Attitude. By C. H. WADDINGTON. *Pelican Books. 6d.*

This is an important book, because it is, so far as I know, the first intelligent and intelligible attempt to associate the attitude of science with the attitude of art; to integrate the approach of factual and controlled observation with the approach of intuition and inspiration. Both the text and the illustrations cover the range of contemporary cultural experience, from Paul Klee to the Cavendish Laboratories, from Nazi concrete curves to Auden's exposed nerves. But Waddington is a Doctor of Science, an eminent geneticist. While he attempts to survey the whole field of contemporary thinking impartially, he continually plumps down too easily on the side of the scientist. By doing so, he somewhat fails to achieve the purpose of his book. It is a gallant failure. And his tough, pungent style makes it extremely stimulating.

At an early stage, while he is still talking about E. E. Cummings, and "anti-scientific" poems of Day Lewis, it becomes evident that science is the thing, science is right; "science can win this war," and so on. But can it? Is science something separate, independent, complete? Are scientists a unique group? I think not. One of the worst mistakes that scientists have made—a mistake which

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has helped to bring us into our present mess and which is apparent throughout this excellent Pelican—is to think of science as something special, a sort of higher attribute. On various scientific expeditions I have shared Arctic tents and jungle huts with twenty-four different scientists, several of them with justly great reputations. I have been unable to detect the faintest distinction between the logical behaviour, the private life, of these companions and other human beings, such as the many painters and cannibals whom I count as friends. I have seen two eminent scientists come to blows on the edge of a precipice, over a trivial matter, accentuated by the discomfort of some months away from civilisation. I have known a whole scientific expedition disintegrate because of small unscientific disputes. And I have been compelled to conclude that scientists adopt the scientific attitude only in their work—only for the bat or gnat, the gene or atom. On a simple subject like sharing out food from a tin on the top of a tropical mountain, the calculating code collapses. This is no reflection on science; on the contrary. But it cuts away a lot of the ground from scientists when they step out into the wider world and proclaim, as they have done in recent years, their superior mission, their universal understanding. Waddington, for instance, strikes his final note with perfect confidence:

> Science by itself, and so far as I can see *only science by itself*, *unadulterated* by mixture with any contrary ideal, is able to provide mankind with a way of life which is, firstly, self-consistent and harmonious, and, secondly, free for the exercise of that objective reason on which our material progress depends.

Science *by itself* cannot do anything like this. Scientists are human beings, and they are therefore always—if good human beings—getting adulterated. Science is only one of several techniques for looking at life and at death; it is not an ideal. The scientist is a person who has had a scientific training; the dentist has had (one hopes) a dental training; the parachutist has had a parachute training. Each makes his important contribution to human unhappiness. But science does not particularly hold the secret of death and life—it holds no more than the secret of discovering about it.

In a recent number of *New Writing*, Stephen Spender says (with a humility recently only too rare among poets):

> The first responsibility of the artist is to describe the truth as he sees it. He is primarily a witness, and his audience, his judges, can draw their own conclusions. He is not himself an arbiter, a dictator, a philosopher, or a scientist, trying to say the last word about human behaviour or the nature of the universe.
>
> This humble attitude towards truth, insisting on truth as the poet sees it, but, nevertheless, implying the existence of a wider reality beyond the single poetic experience, is the keynote to the modern movement in poetry.

Science could make no fairer description of its method. And it is a bad thing if scientists, flushed by great technical advances, begin to adopt a Messianic attitude. They are right in insisting that they must take more responsibility for their work and its implications; right in reacting now against their long-standing social irresponsibility. They are wrong in thinking that they must therefore take *everything*.

In their isolation, scientists have at last begun to feel properly worried about themselves. In the last five years they have tried to show themselves to the unscientific fellow. The attempt, as Waddington frankly admits in his book (page 55), has been a failure; I ventured to suggest, in a letter to this paper some years ago (at a time when great things were expected from the new Social Relations Division of the British Association), that it would fail. It was bound to fail. You do not get social relations merely by proclaiming them. You have to have the relations; you have to be social—and humbly so at first. You have to pass beyond the doors of "logic" and face the vast areas of human ignorance and interest. But scientific training makes it particularly difficult to focus outwards into the guesswork fields of propaganda, politics and policy. Scientists are, taken by and large, exceptionally naive about human society. Thus Dr. Waddington's book is full of superficial comment on everyday life in Britain. For instance:

> Measured utterances have disappeared from present-day use because our thought, more turbulent and contradictory, more ready to apprehend something of which it had been previously unaware, does not fit into that form. Their disappearance is deeply connected with our change to a society in which the comfortably-off have orange-juice before breakfast instead of family prayers.

Orange-juice before breakfast was, at its highest, of infinitesimal importance, and the disappearance of measured utterance was never less than at the present time, when the Prime Minister can (with measured phrase) carry the nation behind him over vast major obstacles. Or again:

> . . . the young aristocracy played tennis and chemin-de-fer at Cannes instead of fox-hunting; the young intellectuals froze up in their first contact with authority, and ever since spent their time telling us how intolerably bored they were at their really very tiresome public schools; the middle classes went to cinemas; only the workers, who had to retain the very considerable amount of guts required to be a miner or iron founder, probably on the whole kept themselves tolerably complete individuals.

It would be kindly to suppose that such generalisation was offered as a joke; alas, not so. That is what an intelligent scientist has seen of "the last twenty years." "The middle classes went to cinemas!" The gutful workers remained pure.

Science can never be social until scientists attend to and encourage the social sciences, which they have long regarded as inferior. Sociology and social psychology lag pathetically far behind all other branches of science. Yet, without the facts and hypotheses which the social sciences can alone provide, no one can plan any sort of scientific *use* of science for the benefit of human society. That is the unmistakable moral of Dr. Waddington's fascinating book; he himself emphasises the value of social science, without fully seeing its key position in deciding the scientific attitude of the future, and in severely limiting the social role of scientists in the present.

TOM HARRISSON

Mr. A. E. W. MASON'S DRAKE

The Life of Francis Drake. By A. E. W. MASON. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 12s. 6d.

On general grounds I am opposed to eminent novelists and literary persons descending into the historical field hoping to carry off a plum with the biography of some very famous historical figure. It is fairly obvious that in general the job should be left to an historian—and an historian who is acquainted with the period which is the background of his subject. I should no more think of writing a life of Alexander the Great or Aurungzib than of writing a book on (Heaven forbid!) the Binomial Theorem. The reason is quite clear: you cannot hope to get your subject in proper perspective, rightly appraise his motives and actions, or at all adequately understand his mind or estimate the place of his work and career in relation to others, unless you know his period pretty thoroughly and have given some years to studying it as an historian. There may be exceptions to this; but Mr. A. E. W. Mason, with his *Drake*, is not one of them. His publishers, I note, hope that this will be considered "the historical biography of the year." That, of course, it is not. It is merely a good popular biography, of which nobody need be ashamed, but which adds nothing whatever to our knowledge of the subject. And there were many popular biographies of Drake before.

Having said that, one should also say that this book has the good qualities which one would expect from its author, and some others. It tells the sheer story of Drake's life—and what a wonderful, wonderful story it is—very well; it gives us the quality of excitement in the subordinate episodes—the attack on Nombre de Dios, the capture of the treasure-ship, *Nuestra Señora de la Concepcion*—as one would expect from the skilled hand of a practised novelist. More important, Mr. Mason has been careful to be as accurate as he can be; he has followed the authority of Sir Julian Corbett's standard Life very closely, and that has stood him in good stead. The book is that of an educated man, and is well-written. It is not a bad book at all; it will serve quite well as a popular introduction to the story of a great career.

But for the historical significance of that career, the questions that it raises, the true nature of Drake's contribution to his age, one will have to go elsewhere.

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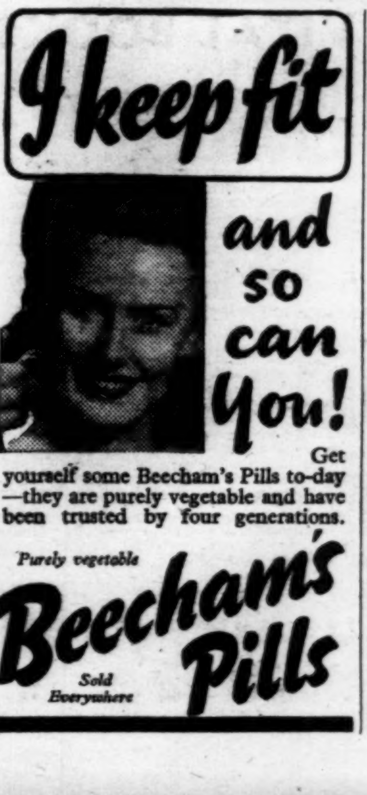

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It is not so much that there are mistakes in this book, but that the foundations of an historical judgment are lacking. A number of smaller mistakes could easily have been put right by a reader of the book, especially if he knew the West country, to which Drake essentially belonged. The name of the ship in which Drake made his voyage to the West Indies in 1572 was not the *Pasha*, as given throughout Chapter IV, but the *Pascoe*, a very recognisable Cornish name. Edmund Tremayne, who was sent down to Plymouth to survey the treasure brought back from the Voyage round the World, was not "Magistrate for Plymouth"—an historical anachronism, anyway—but a very high-up official, Clerk of the Privy Council. Another anachronism which betrays the lack of grip on the period is to refer to Sidney's job as Master of the Ordnance, as C.I.G.S.—a completely different thing. Leicester may have been an unattractive and shifty character, but he was not a nincompoop. Then there is the hoary old one about Lord Admiral Howard's being a Catholic: he was not; he was a strong Protestant. It was Lord William Howard of Naworth who was a Catholic. For Dennis Head, read Pendennis; and that section of the Spanish treasure-ships of 1569 came into Fowey, not Falmouth. And so on. Moreover, as against what is said in several places, Drake wrote fluently with an admirable turn of natural eloquence, as anyone who has read his letters can testify. They are *not* few; quite a number of them survive among the State Papers, etc., etc.

But more important are the historical judgments which are often agley. No conception of the real importance of John Hawkins, or of his initiation of the Round Voyage, from the coast of Guinea to the West Indies; Drake began as a protégé of his, following in his footsteps. No knowledge of the reason for Drake's exploratory attempt to the west and south on getting through the straits of Magellan: it was to scout for Terra Australis, the great rumoured continent that was supposed to fill the empty spaces of the Southern Pacific; that was the reason why Drake had so many agricultural implements on board—a fact which Mr. Mason notices (p. 163). No appreciation of the really exciting background of the great Voyage: the decades of geographical exploration and discussion, an interest in which occupied a number of the best minds in England, statesmen as well as scientists, sailors and explorers. No understanding of the subtlety of the Queen's character and her astonishing political flair: Lytton Strachey had this, but then he was an exception. Nor of Walsingham, nor of Burghley. There was a case for peace; Burghley was not alone in that: he knew better than anybody, far better than the naval men, what a burden the war was upon the very limited resources of the country; and his was the ultimate political responsibility for the well-being of the nation, not theirs.

The fact is that Elizabethan scholarship in the last twenty years has very much deepened our knowledge of the background to all this: on the geographical side, Professor E. G. R. Taylor's discoveries, on the maritime Dr. J. A. Williamson's work, on the political, Professor Neale's. And the upshot of this has been to throw Drake's wonderful career in relief: we understand now somewhat better his shortcomings as well as his magnificent gifts. He was a genius of a navigator, but he was a prodigious individualist, and that led to some resounding failures as well as to tremendous achievements. He was an almost impossible man to co-ordinate, very much out for himself; he was a good deal of an improviser—that was largely why the last voyages went wrong—also perhaps because he was not a good co-ordinator of large enterprises. He was at his best when making his *coups* on his own, and that best was superlative.

But on all this, there is only one man in the country who could give us a really authoritative biography of Drake, incorporating all the results of recent scholarship and of modern criticism; and that is Dr. J. A. Williamson.

A. L. ROWSE

EURIPIDES THE DRAMATIST

The Drama of Euripides. By G. M. A. GRUBE. *Methuen. 22s. 6d.*

This book is a rare phenomenon—a study of Euripides which does not imbue its subject with the prepossessions of its author. Euripides is here displayed in a light uncoloured by the glow of romance and undisturbed by the flashes of brilliant ingenuity which have played about him under other hands. Professor Grube, as becomes a philosopher, is scrupulously fair: if he has prepossessions he has concealed them effectively; they appear as little as the personal tastes of the learned counsel who undertakes a defence at the Bar. This, according to the publishers, is the aim of the book; the method is mainly to put the defendant in the box and let him give evidence in his own behalf.

The planning of the book reflects this purpose. More than two-thirds of it are devoted to a careful analysis of the tragedies in the traditional order of the printed text, an outline of the action which is at the same time a commentary. This is prefaced by chapters which are designed to clear the reader's mind of misconception, indicating with tact and a happy choice of parallels the difficulties of mental adjustment which impede the modern reader and may entangle the finished scholar hardly less than the beginner.

These chapters are a brief, clear and fair exposition of the social and mental background which conditioned the art of the dramatist, whose prime need was "to think in terms intelligible to his fellow-citizens" (p. 29). From this they proceed to outline the heads of the defence. Euripides is to be defended against the charges of incompetence (especially in the form of irrelevance), propaganda and atheism, and vindicated as one who is first and foremost a dramatist.

The succeeding outline of the plays is interesting and valuable both to the beginner and to the expert. Professor Grube is a careful, level-headed reader who interprets fairly and perceptively. Incidentally he reads his proofs with less care than his author's text; or he would not have left the information that Apollo's father was Asclepius (p. 129), or the names Neoptolemus for Orestes (p. 210), Cassandra for Clytemnestra (p. 312), Iphigenia for Ion (p. 346). These errors, however, though not unimportant in their contexts, are soon and easily corrected: they are only superficial flaws upon what is the most satisfactory part of the book.

In its ostensible purpose the book is less satisfying. The points it makes are good points, and well made; e.g., the defence of the prologues against the charge of being perfunctory and undramatic. But Professor Grube's chosen limitation of his range raises questions which are ignored or brushed aside; he is dogmatic rather than persuasive, and does not fully face difficulties which exist for others though they do not for him. Euripides meant, he says, to concentrate the action "on the human plane, between individuals, or even within one individual" (p. 121). On the superhuman plane he was not so much a disbeliever as an agnostic; the gods are portrayed "as they are, not as they ought to be" (p. 61). First and foremost a dramatist, he wanted us "to accept the divine framework as part of the story" (p. 61). This last contention may rescue the *Ion* from strictures possibly undeserved, but it will not do for the *Electra*, where the pointed abstention of the Dioscuri from comment on Apollo is both gratuitous and more damaging than a frontal attack. It seems that Professor Grube has closed his eyes to the real purport of the criticisms upon Euripides' attitude to the gods: I would agree with him that religious doctrine is no necessary part of the dramatist's message; but I do not see how anyone can fail to perceive in Euripides an attitude towards Olympus, more interested than detached, unsympathetic if not actively hostile.

There is a more fundamental begging of the question in another limitation of the book's scope. If Euripides is what Professor Grube presents us, neither more nor less, why have intelligent critics, from Aristophanes onward, been unable to agree with one another, or even with themselves, in their judgments of him? Because those judgments are subjective, says Professor Grube. But the same critics have used presumably the same faculties upon Aeschylus and Sophocles, and have reached something much more like agreement. Professor Grube does not judge Aeschylus and Sophocles: he even mentions them only very rarely. It is perhaps fair enough, on his premises, to ignore Aeschylus, who wrote for a different public of an older generation. But Sophocles made himself intelligible to virtually the same fellow-citizens, and they liked him better; at least they awarded him more prizes. The action of his dramas is on the human plane; his conflicts are between individuals or even within one individual (cf. Neoptolemus in the *Philoctetes*). For him, too, it seems that it is useless to look to heaven for peace or perfect justice; his gods are less humane than his mortals (compare Athena with Odysseus in the *Ajax*); but they do not infest his extant tragedies as they do the stage of Euripides. Why then does Euripides' different and less well harmonised method

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of expressing a common attitude attest his absorption in the dramatic art? Not to face this question, whatever the answer may be, is to leave an unassailed fortress in the rear.

Thus, illuminating as it is, this book is provoking because of the defects of its qualities. Objectivity is not enough: one does not accept Professor Grube's statement of the case against Euripides as a full presentation of the doubts which his plays engender. Euripides is fascinating and baffling to-day as, witness Aristophanes, he was in his own time. To call the bewilderment subjective and to brush it aside does not really help the modern reader; and it is tantalising to feel, as one does, that Professor Grube's insight, sanity and patience might have dissipated the fog. The Meteorological Office may find it necessary in wartime to be non-committal; but such reticence in a writer on ancient tragedy seems cautious to a fault.

J. R. BACON

Express and Admirable. By JAMES AGATE. *Hutchinson.* 5s.

These are extracts from Mr. Agate's recent contributions to the *Daily Express*. Lists of 50 best books, famous dozens for dinner-tables, letters from readers, discovery (rather late?) of Amanda Ros, parody of Gray's Elegy, visits to Southend and the Oxford Union; many anecdotes, amusing and fairly amusing, some new, others old. In the interests of accuracy, it was Shaw, not Wilde, who asked, "Who is Hall Caine?"; and the story that ends ". . . So I told them who I was," "And who were you?" has for fifteen years been attributed to the late Lord Birkenhead. It reappears here as a fresh discovery in a competition of snubs. Mr. Agate fends off criticism by saying that the book is only for dippers; even so, he might have read the proofs and taken out some of the references to "last Friday," "yesterday," "this column," etc. Most self-revealing paragraph in the book describes a Wine and Food gorge in the country to launch Mr. Maurice Healy's *Stay Me With Flagons.* It read oddly as a piece of exhibitionism when it appeared in the *Daily Express*—"Oysters, lobster mould, partridge, creamed, mushrooms, toasted cheese, champagne and six vintage clarets"—and it looks even odder now.

Week-end Competitions

No. 611

Set by Alan Dent

Competitors are invited to submit the likeliest set of six disjointed remarks overheard in the course of a walk along the Strand. Entries must not exceed 250 words in all.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, October 27th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 608

Set by G. W. Stonier

Competitors are invited, with the example of Virginia Woolf's *Flush*, to submit extracts (not more than 250 words) from the memoirs of one of the following: Caligula's horse, Nerval's lobster, Cowper's hare, Mussolini's lion cub, Leda's swan, Balaam's ass, Johnson's cat, Queen Victoria's spaniel, Madame Blavatsky's monkey.

Report by G. W. Stonier

Cowper's hare, Nerval's lobster and Dr. Johnson's cat Hodge, were the best memoirists. As dependents, they loyally served the purpose of reflecting a master's temperament, even down to the cadences of his prose; as natural beings, uncramped by mental fetters, they could watch, respond, love, pity and sympathetically despise. I think it very probable that the hare was both delighted to find in his master a quivering sensibility rare in human nature and amazed to discover the reason of Cowper's tremblings; Hodge, too, with his own lease of lives, must have experienced moments of incredulity in the presence of the great Doctor's fear of Death. Despite this one feels in both cases the unbreakable bonds of domesticity. Nerval's lobster is on a rather different level; a casual affair, one might say. Whichever end of the string you look at—lobster or poet—the triumph of paradox seems to rule out any other emotion; no lobster can expect to attain the full stature of a *flâneur*, and not even Nerval could produce enough witticisms to cover a lasting attachment.

The other pets did less than justice to their situation. Mussolini's lion cub Beppo let out a few wisecracks of the gangster type; Balaam's ass was an anti-Semite and proud of the chance to show it; Caligula's horse passed into the ranks of senators unnoticed; the swan explained his affair by saying that Leda must have mistaken him for Zeus; Queen Victoria's spaniel had his triumph in biting Mr. Gladstone.

I recommend that the first prize go to Vespasian, for his tender memories of a hare, and the second to E. W. Fordham for the best of the Hodges. William Bliss, with a lobster speaking his master's tongue, was the best of the runners up:

Vous comprendrez bien, j'en suis sûr, cher lecteur, que ce n'était pas très amusant pour un homard de bonne famille bretonne d'être trainé par une ficelle par les boulevards de Paris comme la bichonne d'une fille de theatre. . . .

PRIZES (I)

COWPER'S HARE

The most amiable of poets, Mr. Cowper merited my esteem and gained my affection. But, alas, he caused me much unhappiness. For he would confide to me what from others he concealed—his certainty that a relentless deity had predestined him to damnation. I became persuaded, such were his sincerity and eloquence, that I must partake of a similar destiny, and that while he would be devoured by the Worm that never dies, I should be pursued by the Everlasting Greyhound. My melancholy threw me into a consumption, and I cared not whether I lived or died, when Lady Austen presented Mr. Cowper with another member of my species. My protective emotions were aroused—she was of the gentler sex—more tender sentiments supervened, and soon my imaginary alarms were dispelled by my real hopes. In due course my ardour was rewarded, and I now possess the assurance that Providence is kindly. For my family increased with such speed that Mr. Cowper had to choose between releasing his gentle guests and destroying them. He knew no hesitation, and now I roam the smiling fields surrounded by an affectionate and dutiful progeny. On occasion I meet Mr. Cowper on his walks with Mrs. Unwin, and approach him to testify to my gratitude. My only grief is that I have no way of explaining to him that his fears are unfounded, and that a benevolent man, or hare, will not find his Creator more unfeeling than himself.

VESPASIAN

II.

FROM HODGES' MEMOIRS.

The incidents I have related afford unquestionable evidence that Dr. Johnson appreciated my company. That he himself used to go out and buy oysters for me was to be expected if he wished to retain my confidence, and it is not a little remarkable that Mr. Boswell should have regarded that as an indulgence which the Dr. and I looked upon as a just tribute to fidelity.

I own I frequently suffered a good deal from the presence of Mr. Boswell, for whom I acquired considerable distaste. To his intervention I must ascribe an observation which Dr. Johnson no doubt subsequently regretted. Mr. Boswell had observed, merely to curry favour with my friend, that I was a fine cat, whereon the Dr., who was always loth to accord complete assent to any proposition, qualified his agreement by adding that he had had cats he liked better than me. On consideration I perceived that this qualification, which at first vexed me, was to be attributed rather to conversational habit than to accuracy of statement. I mention this matter merely to display Mr. Boswell as a coxcomb whose observations were either themselves futile, or were unhappy in their results, and I record with satisfaction that when he said that he felt uneasy in the company of a cat, the Dr. replied: "He, Sir, whose equanimity is disturbed by the presence of a cat must be furnished with the mental equipment of a mouse."

E. W. FORDHAM

PHILOSOPHY
Vol. XVI. No. 64.
Contents for October.
I. Duty and Interest (1). W. D. Lamont, M.A., D.Phil.
II. Remarks on the Philosophical Status of Physics. Professor E. A. Milne.
III. The Good as Means and as End. W. F. Lofthouse, D.D.
IV. The Free-Will Controversy. Prof. Ledger Wood.
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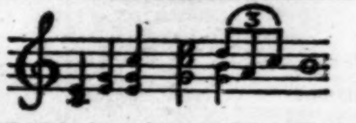

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